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Singsongs, Sisters, and Frattie Friends: The Changing Face of Sororities and Fraternities in the *Cactus* from 1945 to 1970

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by

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Abstract

Singsongs, Sisters, and Frattie Friends: The Changing Face of Sororities and Fraternities in the *Cactus* from 1945 to 1970

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This report seeks to analyze photographic representation of sororities and fraternities in the University of Texas *Cactus* yearbooks between the years 1945 and 19790. I analyze changes in both candid and posed group portraits and put them in context of political activity on campus, as well as the growing extra-curricular options students were offered during college. Between 1945 and 1970, photos of University Panhellenic Council and Interfraternity Council Greeks in the *Cactus* changed dramatically, and I argue that this was the result of increasing polarization on campus between the liberal and conservative communities. While leftist political activity was highly visible, Greeks remained conservative, and their representation in the *Cactus* reflects their resulting shifting role on campus. Similarly, the change reflects an ever-

growing number of extra-curricular activities that forced Greeks to share the spotlight with other student groups.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The “sorority girl” and the “frat boy” have become staple figures on the college campus. Members of Greek-lettered societies praise the brotherhood and sisterhood, community, and involvement they experience, yet non-Greeks often hold a different picture of life in a sorority or fraternity. Fraternity men and sorority women proclaim the virtues of their societies, but others describe them as materialistic, exclusive, cliquish, and wild party-going college students, a perception that has been exemplified in such popular films as *Animal House* and *Legally Blonde*.

Because sororities and fraternities have been such a visible and iconic part of college life, changes in their public image can be valuable when analyzing larger shifts and trends on campus and by, extension, in American society. To examine the public face of Greek life, it is necessary to go to the place where the Greek image is most prevalent—college campuses. Because photography serves as a key medium for self-presentation and the representation of identity, this report will analyze photographs of sororities and fraternities. It will examine images of Greeks that have been included in *The Cactus Yearbook*, an annual publication created by and for University of Texas students. It exists to document the year's social happenings and campus events, and features an extensive photographic archive of pictures taken on and around campus, submitted by students to represent their life at the university in Austin. Though the format of the book varies from year to year, it is typically separated into individual portraits of students, photos of

athletic events and other social happenings that occurred throughout the year, and photographs of extra-curricular student groups. The books also mark important buildings on campus and popular places around Austin. In many cases, photographs with brief, minimal captions are used to capture the students and the events that comprised the academic year. The *Cactus* serves as a significant medium through which to examine the roles that sororities and fraternities played on campus because it is comprised of photos that the organizations submitted to represent themselves; therefore, the images can be analyzed to determine the ways in which sororities and fraternities wanted to be perceived and characterized on campus and by their fellow students. Furthermore, the *Cactus* is the most consistent documentation of life at the University of Texas since it's opening in 1883. The *Cactus* was first published in 1894 and is the oldest publication at the University of Texas. Fraternity members were listed in the first edition of the *Cactus,* and their photos were included the second year (Illustration 1). The first sorority was pictured in 1903 (Illustration 2). *The Cactus Yearbook* photos of sororities and fraternities allow viewers to analyze changes in Greek organizations over time by depicting the ways in which Greeks' representations of their community shift and evolve. This paper seeks to examine the ways in which Greek organizations have changed in relation to political and social movements on campus by analyzing *Cactus Yearbook* photos of the Greek community from 1945 to 1970.[1]

[1]Dabney White, *The Cactus '94* (Austin, TX: Student Association, 1894), NP.
John Lane Sinclair, *The Cactus '02* (Austin, TX: Student Association, 1902), NP.

Illustration 1: First Cactus *fraternity photo.* Photos of fraternity men are included in the 1894 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus '94.* Austin, TX: Student Association, 1894, NP).

Illustration 2: First Cactus *sorority photo*. Photos of sorority women are included in the 1903 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus '02*. Austin, TX: Student Association, 1902, NP).

In many ways, yearbooks are very similar to family albums. Students construct them in an attempt to record the events of the preceding year and the people that composed the university student body. As Marianne Hirsch writes in *Family Frames,* "If one instrument helped construct and perpetuate the ideology which links the notion of universal humanity by the idea of familiarity, it is the camera and its by-products, the photographic image and the family album."[2] She claims the illusion that photographs record an external reality, freeze particular moments in time, and the ambiguity that results from the picture's absent context help to perpetuate a mythology of the family as monolithic, stable, united, and static.[3] According to Hirsch, family pictures tell more about family romances than about actual family life. Rather they are an attempt at constructing family continuity.[4] Yearbooks are similar in that they rely on images of particular moments in time to construct a memory of the passing year, as well as a memory of the campus and student body itself.

There are significant differences between private albums and college yearbooks. A college yearbook is edited by a small group of students that serve as a filter for what is presented to the public. Similarly, a yearbook is mass-produced and distributed to a large number of people, while family albums generally stay tucked away within one household. However, while there are differences between the two mediums, the

[2]Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), 48.

[3]Hirsch, 51.

[4]Hirsch, 192, 214.

similarities are striking. Family pictures offer romance and continuity; college yearbooks do the same for the university community.

Photographs of sororities and fraternities are found in *The Cactus Yearbook* dating back to the of the publication's second edition in 1895. Early volumes contain group photographs, names of members and officers, as well as reproductions of the organizations' crests, mottos, and sometimes sketches of the organizations' houses. For this reason, it is useful to examine *The Cactus Yearbook* for the image that sorority and fraternity members wanted to convey to the rest of the University of Texas campus—in Hirsch's words, the sorority and fraternity romance rather than actual sorority and fraternity life. According to conversations with multiple staff people at the *Cactus*, the candid photos in the books are and always have been submitted by students and therefore represent the way in which Greeks wish to be both viewed and remembered. Like family albums, the yearbooks help to perpetuate a mythology of sororities and fraternities. By analyzing the photos in the yearbooks and the changes in the desired representation of Greek Life—of the image the organizations wanted to disseminate—trends and shifts in the public face of Greek Life at the University of Texas can be observed. Yearbook photos are also useful when analyzing these changes in relation to trends and shifts in the politics on campus. Furthermore, there are two separate parties viewing this compilation of photos. Members of sororities and fraternities that submitted the photos to the *Cactus* clearly felt that the photos represented the Greek community in a desirable fashion—they chose the pictures. The other party, the non-

Greeks, views the photos through the lens of their own stereotypes and perception from the outside of these organizations.

While many scholars have written about student life and the college campus, relatively few have focused on sororities and fraternities, especially in regards to political movements on campus. Diana Turk's book, *Bound by a Mighty Vow*, discusses the history of sororities and how they came to existence.[5] She examines the reasons these organizations were founded and how they have changed through time. *The Company He Keeps* by Nicholas L. Syrett examines the ways in which white college fraternities have defined masculinity over the years.[6] *Inside Greek U* by Alan DeSantis provides a more contemporary look at gender roles, power, and pressure in relation to fraternities and sororities.[7] Finally, *Our Fight Has Just Begun* discusses Black Greek-Letter organizations in the 21st century and *The Divine Nine* tells the history of Black sororities and fraternities.[8] While all of these texts contributed to my understanding of sororities and fraternities, none examined the specific ways in which Greek

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[5]Diana B.Turk, *Bound by a Mighty Vow: Sisterhood and Women's Fraternities, 1870-1920* (New York: New York University, 2004)

[6] Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009)

[7] DeSantis, Alan D., *Inside Greek U: Fraternities, Sororities, and the Pursuit of Pleasure, Power, and Prestige.* Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007.

[8] Parks, Gregory S., ed. *Our Fight Has Just Begun.* Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2008.

Ross, Lawrence C., Jr. *The Divine Nine: The History of African American Sororities and Fraternities.* New York: Kensington Publishing, 2000.

organizations change in relation to specific political and social movements. Furthermore, none of these analyzed the ways in which Greeks or students in general represent themselves through the medium of yearbooks.

Between 1945 and 1970, the photographs included in the yearbooks changed dramatically. Into the 1960s, a growing political divide put the traditionally conservative Greeks on one side of a polarizing, heated climate on the UT campus, which was a major center of new left activity. The emphasis in the photographs changed from a mixture of co-ed Greek events, public university events, and private pictures of sorority women and fraternity men spending time with their brothers and sisters to a focus on mainly co-ed events—usually parties attended by Greeks only. Photos from campus-wide spirit events such as Round-Up—a weekend of festivities resembling a homecoming of sorts—and Campus Carnival—another campus-wide spirit event—as well as sorority tea parties and fraternity card games are replaced by images from Greek-only social functions such as "Frattie Friend Night," Playboy-themed Parties, and cocktail hours open only to sorority and fraternity members. This time period also marked a dramatic shift in group photos from slight differences in individual members of each organization towards an extremely homogenous appearance.

These shifts at the University of Texas become significant when putting them in context with dramatic political turmoil on both a national and local front. Nationally, a

new political left followed the politically conservative era of the 1950s. Inspired by black youths' activism in the Civil Rights movement and from white youth participation in the late 1950s and early 1960s, political movements at UT were comprised of college-educated, white youth. The University of Texas student body remained largely conservative and predominantly white—the first Black student was admitted to the law school in 1950 and in 1960, only 200 of 19,000 University of Texas students were African-American--but sit-ins, protests, and boycotts of racist local establishments provided some stirrings of activism.[9] Much like the white college students making up the vast majority of the Greek community at the University of Texas, few of the new leftists had ever known poverty.[10]

Meanwhile, women's social roles and contentment as wives and mothers was being called into question. In her seminal work, *The Feminine Mystique,* published in 1963, Betty Friedan noted a decline in women's interest in education during the 1950s. According to Friedan, colleges became more concerned with preparing young women for the role of the wife and fewer female college graduates went on to distinguish themselves in a career or profession than those in the classes graduated before World War II. [11] College enrollment for women increased during the postwar years, but they represented a smaller percentage of the student population. Young women in an all-

[9] Douglas Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia Press, 1998).

[10] Rossinow, 1-2.

[11] Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton and Co., 2001), 150-4.

white sample were twice as likely to enter college as the previous generation, but they were less likely to complete their degrees and more likely to marry highly-educated men.[12] While conservative attitudes toward sex and gender prevailed, sexual behavior had begun to change with increased acceptance of sex outside of traditional heterosexual, monogamous relationships, primarily marriage. With the 1960s came the feminist movement that called this focus of women as solely domestic homemakers into question.

In contrast to these shifts and changes on campus, fraternities and sororities have always claimed to maintain roots in unchanging time-tested mottos, seals, and rituals. However, their identity as represented in *The Cactus Yearbook* seems to indicate that the new political left created waves that rippled into the traditionally conservative, supposedly timeless Greek organizations. After having analyzed *Cactus* photos and their historical context, I attribute these changes to two factors. The shift in the role of sororities and fraternities was likely due in part to the growing popularity of other student groups on campus. Students had more options and sororities and fraternities were forced to share the spotlight with non-Greek groups. More importantly, the new left movement on campus placed the traditionally conservative Greeks on the opposite side of visible political activity. Greeks responded to this growth of other student groups by differentiating themselves from other groups and

[12] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 68.

emphasizing what made them unique—their ready-made social network, base of wealth, and seemingly homogeneous body of students. They responded to the political changes on campus by drawing inward and seemingly reveling in their position opposite these liberal, new left movements. As the feminist movement questioned gender roles and a patriarchal society, Greeks held tight to social functions revolving around dating and courtship. Sorority and fraternity members flaunted material goods and wealth in contrast to New Leftists who chose poverty. The Greek community remained firmly segregated, despite the civil rights movement's call for equality for people of color. The UT Greek community as a whole opposed the political values of the new left; even so, the liberal social movement affected the role and identity of sororities and fraternities on the University of Texas campus.

Chapter 2: Historicizing the College Campus: Political Awareness and Action

The 1930s proved to be a period of heightened political awareness on the college campus. In *Class, Culture, and the Classroom: The Student Peace Movement of the 1930s,* Eileen Eagan writes,

> The economic and social conditions of the thirties made possible a challenge to traditional collegiate culture. The emergence of some students as political activists fostered a new kind of student community and identity. These developments challenged the prevailing view of higher education as a time for preparation rather than action and of the campus as a cocoon rather than a laboratory. For a time, at least, the "ivory tower" leaned a little to the left.[13]

During this period, some students clung to a more familiar collegiate life that included sororities and fraternities. Greek organizations helped mold the campus into a closed community and rewarded competitiveness, team play, conformity, and the controlled expression of emotions.[14] The idea that more conservative students who longed for a traditional educational experience would turn to sororities and fraternities sets the stage for my argument that during the following four decades, traditionally conservative Greeks found themselves on the opposite side of visible new left activity.

The onset of World War II coincided with a collapse of the American student movement that had existed during the thirties. When the United States became involved with the War in 1941, many college students volunteered or were drafted into the armed

[13]Eileen Eagan, *Class, Culture, and the Classroom: The Student Peace Movement of the 1930s* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981) 4.

[14] Eagan, 7-8.

forces and campus activism drastically declined.[15] Student activism revolved around issues such as an increase in the veterans' allowance and the elimination of discrimination in campus housing.[16] During the immediate post-war period, student groups across the country made a number of efforts to revive the student movement, but none were successful.[17] This remained the case into the fifties. According to Eagan,

> In the fifties, political conflict was externalized: class war cloaked by Cold War. Within the United States the activists of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the loyalty programs of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, the persecutions of the Smith Act, and a general anti-Communist hysteria crushed what was left of American radicalism and made social activism and political activity dangerous and unappealing. On campus, the firing of activist teachers and the intimidation of the faculty in general left students with little encouragement or support for political activity or concern.[18]

During the late 1950s, civil liberties, peace, and civil rights became three new threads of student activism. During the fifties and sixties, the civil rights movement revived the American Left and the struggle against racism.[19] According to Philip Altbach and Robert Cohen, the sixties witnessed an explosion of American student political activism. For the first time since the thirties, college students played on a national political stage to such an extent that a sitting president, Lyndon Johnson, chose not to run for reelection in reaction to student demonstrations against his Vietnam

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[15] Philip G. Altbach, "Before Berkeley: Historical Perspectives on American Student Activism," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 395 (1971): 9.
[16] Eagan, 235.
[17] Altbach, "Before Berkeley: Historical Perspectives on American Student Activism," 9.
[18] Eagan, 235-6.
[19] Eagan, 250-1.

policies.[20]

In "From Revolution to Apathy: American Student Activism in the 1970s," Altbach maintained, "The sixties was the zenith of American student activism, and the impact of the counter culture and of some of the political struggles of this period continues to influence the campus."[21] Perhaps more importantly, the volumes of the *Cactus Yearbook* that I am analyzing were printed during a time period in which student activism and liberal movement and political action on campus went from being mild and low-profile to prominent. The Vietnam War was a key factor in stimulating the largest and most militant student movement in American history; the civil rights movement, the peace movement, and a willingness to engage in activism because of a more liberal political atmosphere in the nation provided the background to the anti-war movement.[22] In *The Politics of Authenticity*, Doug Rossinow discusses political action at the University of Texas. According to Rossinow,

> Austin, Texas was the largest center of new left activism in the American South, one of the biggest in the United States, and probably the most important in all the vast spaces east of Berkeley, west of Morningside Heights, and south of Chicago.[23]

The university's Greek community provides a similar center due to the university's size. While sororities and fraternities maintained their traditional structure**,**

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[20] Philip G. Altbach and Robert Cohen, "American Student Activism: The Post-Sixties Tranformation," *The Journal of Higher Education* 61 (1990), 32.

[21] Philip G. Altbach, "From Revolution to Apathy: American Student Activism in the 1970s," *Higher Education* 8 (1979), 609.

[22] Altbach, "From Revolution to Apathy," 613-4.

[23] Rossinow, 9.

exemplifying heteronormativity through dating-driven events such as cocktail hours and mixers, displaying wealth through large houses and lavish parties, and remaining racially segregated, campuses became alive with progressive, leftist activity, such as antiwar and peace sit-ins and the Free Speech Movement at the University of California, Berkeley in 1964. The shift in the *Cactus Yearbook* photos of Greeks illustrate the growing political polarization on the college campus that resulted from a dramatic rise in student activism, protests, and awareness.

Chapter 3: A Background on Greek Culture

Sororities and fraternities are difficult to discuss without first explaining their systems of operation. Many sororities and fraternities are national organizations with advisors and executives at the local, state, regional, and national level. Local sectors of national organizations are referred to as chapters, though the terms "organization" and "chapter" are often used interchangeably to describe local groups, as I will do in this paper. Many organizations are part of larger groups known as councils, which also operate at the college or university, state, regional, and national level. This paper will examine sororities from what is now known as the University Panhellenic Council, often shortened to Panhellenic, and fraternities from the Interfraternal Council, otherwise known as the IFC.[24] These organizations are the longest standing councils in the United States. The third oldest council is the National Pan-Hellenic Council, not to be confused with the University Panhellenic Council. The National Pan-Hellenic Council, or NPHC, is comprised of nine historically Black sororities and fraternities, whereas the University Panhellenic Council and Interfraternal Council are historically female and male, respectively, as well as white.

The first fraternity-like groups developed on college campuses as early as 1775.

[24]Other councils, such as the United Greek Council, the National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations, and the Texas Pan-Hellenic Council, often focus on culturally-based fraternities and sororities. In itself, the development and representation of these councils is a fascinating study, but it is outside the scope of this project.

By 1870, 48 fraternities of men existed.[25] These groups intended to bring together the most cultured young men on campus into small groups. They offered an escape from the monotony, dreariness, and unpleasantness of the collegiate regimen, which was very strict and left little room for entertainment or community development.[26] They intended to fill an emotional vacuum that was left by the removal from family and home support networks. Finally, the groups aimed to foster masculinity and strength in men to help them succeed in their post-baccalaureate lives. They saw themselves as schools of success. As Frederick Rudolph states, they "prepared men to take their place among men, not among the angels."[27]

The women who founded the first sororities found themselves facing not only the oppression of strict university policies and standards, but also the oppression of males who doubted women's place in the academy. In *Bound by a Mighty Vow,* Diane Turk provides an excellent background on women's sororities.[28] As Turk writes, only eight state universities admitted women in 1870.[29] Women at college found themselves in need of community and support among other women who shared their experience of

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[25]Diana B. Turk, *Bound by a Mighty Vow: Sisterhood and Women's Fraternities, 1870-1920* (New York: New York University, 2004), 3.

[26]Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1962), 146.

Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions* (New York: Viking Press, 1931), 377.

[27]Rudolph, 150.

[28]Originally, women's Greek-letter societies called themselves fraternities. For the purpose of clarity, I will use the word "sorority" when referring to women's groups and "fraternity" when referring to men's groups.

[29]Turk, 6.

marginalization and discrimination and felt the need to prove themselves worthy of the college experience. Therefore, the first sororities were literary societies; their founders considered academics as their central mission. The women spent much of their time practicing literary pieces and orations in front of each other.[30] Sororities caught on quickly, and between 1870 and 1920, 90,800 women pledged. Fraternities and sororities had become a staple on the college campus, and by 1920, roughly thirty percent of college students labeled themselves with Greek letters.[31] It is important to note that the first sororities and fraternities were comprised completely of white, Protestant members. While groups' official identities and missions differentiate themselves by gender and sometimes religion, the groups were also based, albeit sometimes unofficially, on whiteness.

[30]Turk, 23-4.
[31]Turk, 5-6.

Chapter 4: Racial Integration and Greeks at the University of Texas

At the University of Texas, all students were white until 1950 when the law school admitted Heman Sweatt, an African American student, under court order. In 1956, UT allowed the first black undergraduates to attend. By 1960, there were an estimated 200 black students at a campus of 19,000.[32] Through the 1960s, Panhellenic and Interfraternity Council organizations remained completely white, and three National Pan-Hellenic Council groups were founded; their members were all African-American. Throughout the sixties, the National Pan-Hellenic Council included between 40 and 50 students, or 20-25%, of UT's Black community, a percentage that was comparable to the percentage of white students participating in Greek organizations.

According to Rossinow, as sit-ins and stand-ins calling for integration gained momentum in Austin, there was one organized student government political party on campus, the Representative Party. Notably, the Representative Party was dominated by the fraternities and sororities; the group was conservative. The Representative Party held control through 1961 when they were defeated by the Student Party, a group of students hoping to use student government as a base for liberal advocacy and activism. They held court briefly, until 1962, when, according to Rossinow, the Greeks regrouped and took control of the Student Assembly once again, putting a stop to the use of student government for leftist activism. All student organizations remained segregated through 1964, when formal segregation ended at the University of Texas; liberal

[32] Rossinow, 117.

student groups continued to fight for social equality.[33]

As sit-ins and stand-ins called for integration, Univeristy Panhellenic Council sororities and Inferfraternity Council fraternities at the University of Texas remained completely white. In his autobiography of life in the South, *North Toward Home*, Willie Morris describes his time at the University of Texas during the sixties; he went as far as to refer to masses of counterdemonstrators outside of pro-integration student meetings as "frat rats," pointing to a connection between the conservative collegiate and fraternities.[34] The whiteness of sororities and fraternities at the University of Texas after formal segregation ended in 1964 can be attributed in small part to a lack of access to the university for people of color. Economic inequity also made it more difficult for people of color to afford the costly membership dues that a sorority or fraternity requires. Regardless, the conservative affiliations of Greek students in student government and the presence of fraternity members as counterdemonstrators at pro-integration meetings indicate that this whiteness was not only coincidental but the result of racist Greek attitudes.[35] Furthermore, the Panhellenic Council's resistance to a call for all student organizations to sign a statement agreeing that membership would not be based on race and ethnicity, indicates that whiteness was key to their group identities.

[33] Rossinow, 143.
[34] Willie Morris, *North Towards Home* (New York, Vintage Books, 2000)
[35] Rossinow, 125-47.

Chapter 5: A History of the Positive Greek Image

Proponents of Greek organizations speak of their societies' commitments to positive personal values. Phi Delta Theta's constitution proclaims, “The men of Phi Delta Theta share a commitment—to the intense bond of friendship between brothers, high academic achievement, and living life with integrity.”[36] Phi Gamma Delta, a fraternity, claims it exists on five basic tenets: Friendship, knowledge, service, morality, and excellence.[37] These statements were embraced by each organization’s founding members and have remained unchanged since. Many Greeks claim that these values are the foundation on which their organizations are built and are integral to the organizations and the relationship between Greek brothers. Sororities operate in a similar way, and often tout their mottoes. Alpha Xi Delta's reads, “Inspiring women to realize their potential.” Kappa Delta's motto states, “Let Us Strive for That Which is Honorable, Beautiful, and Highest,” and the women of Zeta Tau Alpha claim, “To Seek the Noblest.”[38] Many sororities’ mottoes also state a priority of sisterhood. Alpha Delta Pi's reads, “We live for each other,” and Alpha Phi's proclaims, “Union Hand in Hand.” These historic mottoes and tenets are often held up in defense of the positive aspects of Greek life. Greeks claim that these values and mottoes are the constant that runs through their brothers and sisters and are the timeless backbone of their rituals, and of

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[36]“History,” *Phi Delta Theta*, available from www.phideltatheta.org; Internet; accessed 5 May 2005.

[37]“The Values of Phi Gamma Delta,” *Phi Gamma Delta*, available from www.phigam.org; Internet; accessed 5 May 2005.

[38] *Greek Info Guide 2004* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Dean of Students: 2004), 22-23.

the official ceremony that marks a member's entrance into the organization and links them to all other members, both of the present and in the past. In this same vein, the use of the words "brother" and "sister" is another attempt to construct an image of closeness and undying loyalty and love that goes beyond friendships made outside of the Greek community. While Greeks embrace these mottos and rituals as unchanging, I will go on to discuss the ways in which sororities and fraternities at the University of Texas have evolved, complicating the notion that these organizations' values and roles do not waver.

Chapter 6: A History of the Negative Greek Image

According to Diane Turk, by the time the second generation of sorority women had entered college, they had taken to a lifestyle that the first generation found to be materialistic. They attributed this change to women's increasing acceptance at the universities and college. Furthermore, the second-generation members took little time to learn anything about the academic component of their organizations. Turk asserts that once sororities had assured their place and stability on campus, the competition for "desirable" members became stiffer and rivalries between organizations became more intense. Women concentrated their efforts on setting themselves apart from and above their female peers, their actions shaped more by the desire to make their groups prestigious rather than develop themselves as individual women. This created another point of conflict with the founding generation of members.[39]

When the University of Texas opened in 1883, four fraternities were founded within the first year of operation. By 1893, nine fraternities had been founded in Austin, and by 1910, the number had grown to fifteen. Sororities were a bit slower to appear. The first sorority at the University of Texas was founded in 1902. Within five years, there were four sororities at UT, and by 1912, ten years after the first UT sorority had been founded, there were five. By this time, non-Greek students were already voicing frustration with the lifestyle choices of sorority and fraternity members. In 1913 a group of students known as the Barbarians, or Barbs, brought themselves before both

[39]Turk, 4-5.

the university and state legislatures and requested the removal of sororities and fraternities from the University of Texas campus. They believed that the further existence of Greek-letter societies was detrimental to the best interest of the university.[40] These groups claimed that sororities and fraternities used discriminatory practices against the large majority of students coming from rural districts. They felt that the Greek system gave the impression that the University of Texas was a "rich man's school" with aristocratic tendencies, rather than an open, public institution. The Barbs claimed that they, as non-Greeks, felt condemned to social ostracism through an official barrier raised against them, argued that Greeks swung campus elections with block voting and displayed an inappropriate amount of materialism.[41]

While both the university and state ruled in favor of keeping the Greek system in place, a public explanation of the decision, "Findings of the Faculty Committee in the Case Against Fraternities at the University of Texas," confirmed many of the conflicts that non-Greeks had with UT sororities and fraternities. They stated that average academic performance was lower in Greeks than in non-members, that Greeks practiced unfair discrimination, and that they had allowed themselves to become the means of expression of most of the extravagance that went on at the university.[42] Despite these findings, the Committee Against Fraternities believed it would be unjust

[40]Executive Committee of the Non-Fraternity Students, "Against Fraternities at the University of Texas" dated January 8, 1913 (Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin) 4.

[41]Executive Committee of the Non-Fraternity Students, 8-14.

[42]"Findings of the Committee in the Case Against Fraternities at the University of Texas" (Austin, TX: Van Boeckmann Jones Co., Printers: 1913), 2.

to abolish the groups without giving them an opportunity for reform. The group also argued that abolition of Greek societies would not eradicate social exclusiveness and snobbishness, unfair political activity and low scholarship at the university. Rather, immediate abolition would destroy the potential for good in fraternities and sororities.[43]

Similar conflicts and criticism of the Greek community continued to surface. A study done by the University of Indiana examined student budgets in 1940 and 1941. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz writes,

> Unquestionably the fraternity brother had more money than the independent. With the exception of rent, textbooks, university fees, and general reading, the unorganized student spent far less on every item than the organized. The greatest difference was inherent: the Greek men paid a considerable fee for fraternity membership.

These budgets showed notable disparities in clothing, refreshments, and recreation.[44] A separate study at Cornell found fraternity members to be richer. The study asserted that it cost money not only to join Greek organizations, but also to keep up with the expected life style that included clothing, dates, and alcohol.[45]

Other scholars have contributed to this conversation about the more superficial elements of Greek life. In "Social Class and Campus Dating," Ira L. Reiss describes a value system most likely to be found among Greeks on the college campus; Reiss's research is particularly pertinent to this study, as his data was collected during the

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[43]"Findings of the Committee in the Case Against Fraternities at the University of Texas," 6-7.

[44]Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1987), 136.

[45]Horowitz, 138.

sixties, the same period from which *Cactus* photos are being analyzed. Key factors in the system included popularity, access to cars and money, and belonging to highly ranked Greek organizations. Class status relating to parental background was also a factor.[46] Furthermore, Reiss writes, "Good looks and good grades were valued differently by Greek and independent males. The Greeks stressed good looks and the independents stressed good grades."[47]

[46] Ira L. Reiss, "Social Class and Campus Dating," *Social Problems* 13 (1965), 193-4.
[47] Reiss, 201.

Chapter 7: Greeks at the University of Texas

When the University of Texas at Austin opened on September 11, 1883, officials on campus welcomed fraternities because they provided much-needed housing to young men. [48] Phi Delta Theta received its charter on September fifteenth, 1883, Kappa Alpha followed on October fifth, and Phi Gamma Delta on November first.[49] The university was less willing to condone sororities for fear that they might lead to social misconduct of women. Therefore, women's organizations first appeared without official university approval. On February nineteenth, 1902, Pi Beta Phi was the first sorority officially established at the university, followed by Kappa Kappa Gamma on May twelfth.[50] The community grew steadily, and by 1925, the university had thirteen sororities and twenty-six fraternities. It is important to note that UT's community was not as proportionately large as other schools' Greek systems. In 1925, 4,500 chapters of 200 national organizations were in operation at 660 college campuses, owning property valued at a combined $32,826,000. The University of Michigan was home to 102 Greek-letter societies, the University of Illinois to ninety-six, and Cornell University had eighty-eight fraternities and sororities. Even so, the University of Texas sororities and fraternities grew at a rapid pace even after the national community had reached maturity in the 1920s.

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[48]Margaret C. Berry, *UT History 101: Highlights of the University of Texas* (Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1997), 68.

[49]Margaret C. Berry, *Student Life and Customs, 1883-1933 at the University of Texas,* Unpublished Dissertation for Degree of Doctor of Education in Teacher's College (New York: Columbia University, 1965), 323.

[50]Berry, *Student Life and Customs*, 324-6.

In *UT History 101,* Margaret Berry provides an extensive history of campus life at the University of Texas. Berry, a prominant historian of UT culture and traditions, writes that by the beginning of the twentieth century, fraternities and sororities were strong forces on campus and heavily influenced student life. Greek organizations provided the majority of campus social events.[51] According to Berry, this was the case through the 1950s, and the photos in the *Cactus* support this. At this point, extracurricular groups other than Greek societies began to blossom, and as a result, fraternities and sororities took a back seat on campus. While the Greek community remained strong in numbers—one third of the student body was a member of a Greek-letter society—their main role was to provide leadership of planned frivolity.[52] As the political climate at the University of Texas heated up during the 1960s, the conservative Greek community found themselves in opposition to the visible, new left community. This furthered their shift in identity on campus.

[51]Berry, *UT History 101: Highlights of the History of the University of Texas,* 76-7.
[52]Berry, *UT History, 101,* 82-5.

Chapter 8: An Official Separation

As the University of Texas entered the 1960s, the civil rights movement was gaining speed and campus officials began an attempt to enforce racial, gender, and religious equality. This movement was accompanied by several changes in regulations that affected the relationship between the university and the Greek community, namely the University Panhellenic Council.

In May of 1965, the university decided to limit approved housing status to residential units owned and operated by the university, giving students free choice in selection of residence and limiting the university's ability to enforce contracts to university-owned property only. This meant that sorority houses were no longer under university jurisdiction, beginning a policy-based separation between University Panhellenic sororities and the university. In May of 1966, the Students Association Social Calendar Committee--the committee that registered all social events being held by student organizations each week--decided it could no longer be responsible for all social activities on such a large campus; the decision created yet another disconnect between sororities and the university.

In January of 1967, the Dean of Students informed the University Panhellenic Council and the Interfraternity Council that student organizations were no longer allowed to occupy space allotted for office or classroom and had to move elsewhere during sorority or fraternity events or for headquarter offices. The two groups moved all operations, including council headquarters, into a new high-rise coed dormitory that

was privately owned off-campus, breaking a significant tie between sororities and fraternities and the University of Texas.

In September of 1967, student organizations were notified that they had to register through the Committee on Student Organizations, entitling them to sponsor or present public performances on university property, raise funds on university property, and reserve the use of university facilities. Eligibility for registration required having organization membership limited to students, as well as having a membership that did not deny anyone on the basis of race, nationality, or religion. Furthermore, organizations were required to submit constitutions to be on file in the office of the Director of Student Activities and available to the Committee on Student Activities, as well as the Credentials Committee of the Students Association.

In February of 1968, the Panhellenic Council at UT conferred with the National Panhellenic (not to be confused with National Pan-Hellenic, the African-American organization) Conference Committee on Research and decided that the university's requests of sororities "infringed upon the individual freedom and the freedom of fraternal orders and private clubs guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution." The committee also determined that the requests violated the organizations' privacy as guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment. On March 1, 1968, the National Panhellenic Council Committee on Research and Education informed the Texas University Panhellenic Council that it did not approve of the sororities filing of their constitutions nor of registering as a student organization. On March 15, the

Panhellenic Council and its member sororities officially became disconnected from the university, breaking all official affiliations. While the sororities continued to function in a similar manner as to when they were official University of Texas groups, they were now private organizations.

It is important to note in this history that as the University Panhellenic Council broke away from the university, there was also movement to recognize historically African-American sororities as part of their council. In 1965, the University Panhellenic Council made the decision to extend invitations for associate membership to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., both historically Black organizations. According to representatives of the Panhellenic Council at the time, the organizations were not invited for full membership because nationally, they were not members of the National Panhellenic Council, their grade point average did not meet UPC's requirement, and the organizations were significantly smaller than current University Panhellenic Council members. The two organizations accepted associate membership. When the National Pan-Hellenic Council--the traditional governing body over historically Black sororities and fraternities--was founded at UT, Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta left the University Panhellenic Council and became members of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

Notably, the traditionally white sororities as well as fraternities continued to be comprised completely of white members, even while Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta were part of the University Panhellenic Council. While group photos of

the African-American groups are included in the *Cactus*, there appear to be no members of color in any other University Panhellenic Council organizations. Furthermore, no candid sorority or fraternity photos picture members of color, other than group photos and corresponding candid photos of the African-American Greek organizations, and there is no evidence of integration beyond the formal associate memberships of these two groups with UPC.

The University Panhellenic Council refused to sign the anti-discrimination agreement, but the Interfraternity Council willingly signed the statement before it was a mandatory requirement by the university. However, although the organizations did not discriminate in theory, they continued to include only white members until 1970, when one group photo of a fraternity includes a picture of an African-American member. Because they signed the statement, the Interfraternity Council remained connected to the university, at least in terms of official affiliation.

Chapter 9: Changes in the *Cactus* Photos: From Private to Public

Sororities and fraternities hold a notable presence in the *Cactus Yearbook*, a book published by the University of Texas and available for purchase by students. Between 1945 and 1970, a section of formal group photographs was devoted to Greeks. Greek organizations enjoyed their own section in the yearbook, labeled "Sororities and Fraternities," while other student organizations were lumped into the categories of "Clubs" and "Honorary and Service Organizations. The official sorority and fraternity section occupies roughly twenty to twenty-five percent of the *Cactus* pages, a number that stays consistent during the time period of 1945 to 1970. The number of candid photos of Greeks outside of this section, however, diminishes greatly as the public image of sororities and fraternities shifted. While other student groups continued to display pictures of on-campus activities, photographs of Greeks changed notably between 1945 and 1970, visually marking their shifting role on campus.

Houses have always been a staple in the fraternity and sorority image, and this is reflected in the *Cactus*. Chapter houses serve many functions: they provide a place of residence for members, offer a designated space for members to gather and bond, and they serve as a symbol of wealth, abundance, and power. For some fraternities and sororities, the chapter house is as much a symbol of the organization as their crest, motto, or letters. To the non-Greek world, the house is sometimes the most visible and publicly recognizable aspect of Greek life. The walls of the chapter house are boundaries that can be broken only by those who are given permission; they clearly

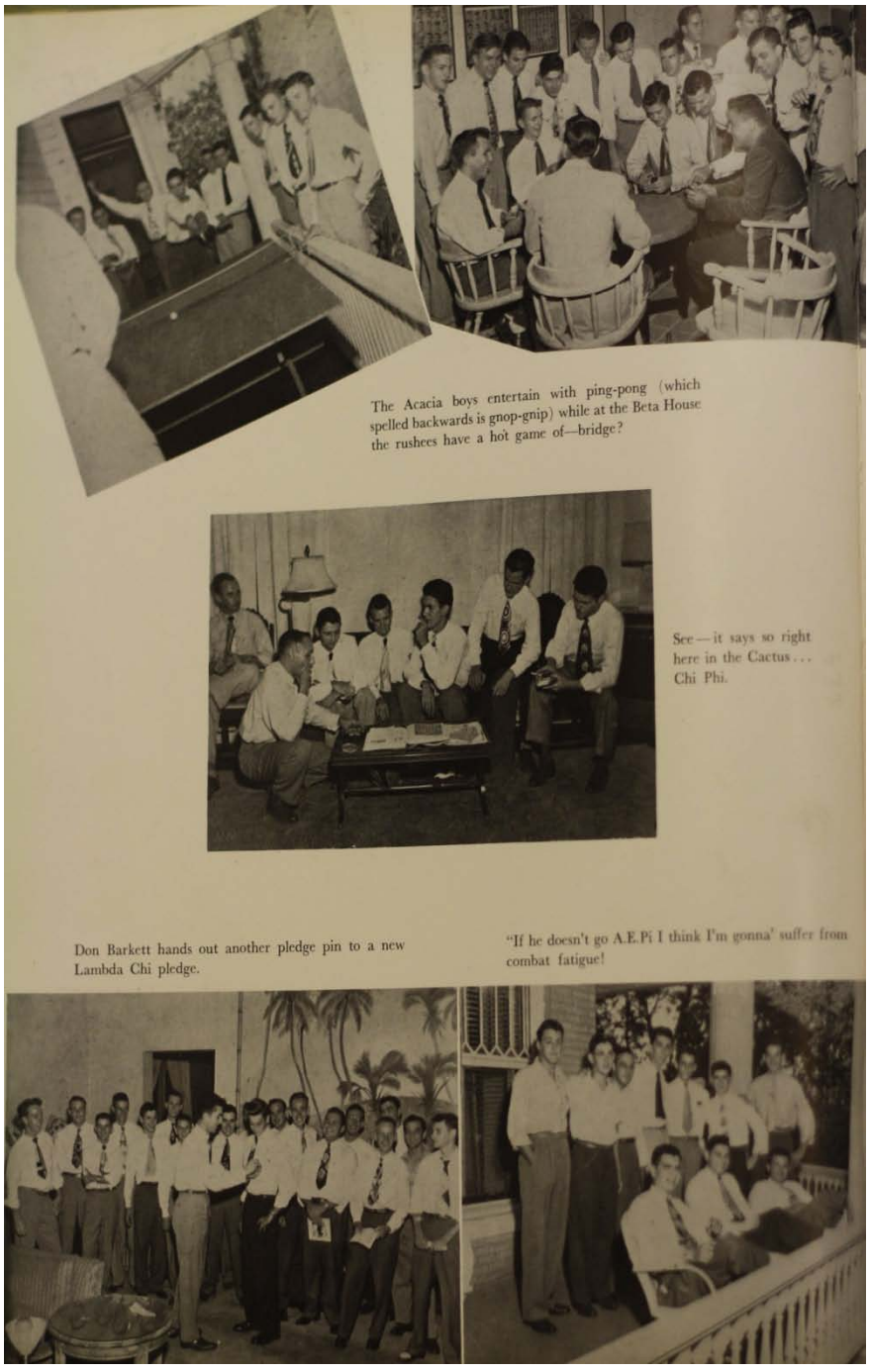
delineate public from private.

Through the early fifties, candid photographs of sorority and fraternity members in the *Cactus Yearbook* demonstrates a balanced mix of images of brothers and sisters gathering in their own houses, Greeks intermingling with each other inside and outside of houses, and fraternity and sorority members participating in university-wide events. Photos pictured groups of only women, only men, and mixed-sex groups.

In 1950, the yearbook included several pictures taken during Rush, the annual recruitment period that takes place at the start of the academic year (Illustration 3). Rush photos from 1950 feature several pictures of fraternity men spending time together in their houses. One page of images includes a photo of men playing ping-pong in the Acacia house. Another photo pictures seventeen men gathered around a table of four members of Beta Theta Pi playing bridge. A third photo features Chi Phis showing potential pledges photos of their organization in the *Cactus Yearbook,* and a fourth includes ten men from Alpha Epsilon Pi gathered on their porch. Each photo pictures a group of men gathered together, and the vast majority of men are facing the camera. Nearly every single man is wearing a button-downed shirt complete with a tie. Every one of the men has a short, conservative haircut.[53] In these photos, the house is a central element to the sisterly and brotherly bonding that supposedly takes place within Greek organizations. Rather than just a materialistic symbol of wealth, it is a site for

[53]Robert W. Waddell and Beth Osburn, *The Cactus* (Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1950), 181.

Illustration 3: 1950 Fraternity Rush Photo Collage. Rush photos in the 1950 *Cactus* emphasize fraternity men spending time together in their houses. (*The Cactus.* Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1950, 181).



The Acacia boys entertain with ping-pong (which spelled backwards is gnop-gnip) while at the Beta House the rushees have a hot game of—bridge?

See—it says so right here in the Cactus . . . Chi Phi.

Don Barkett hands out another pledge pin to a new Lambda Chi pledge.

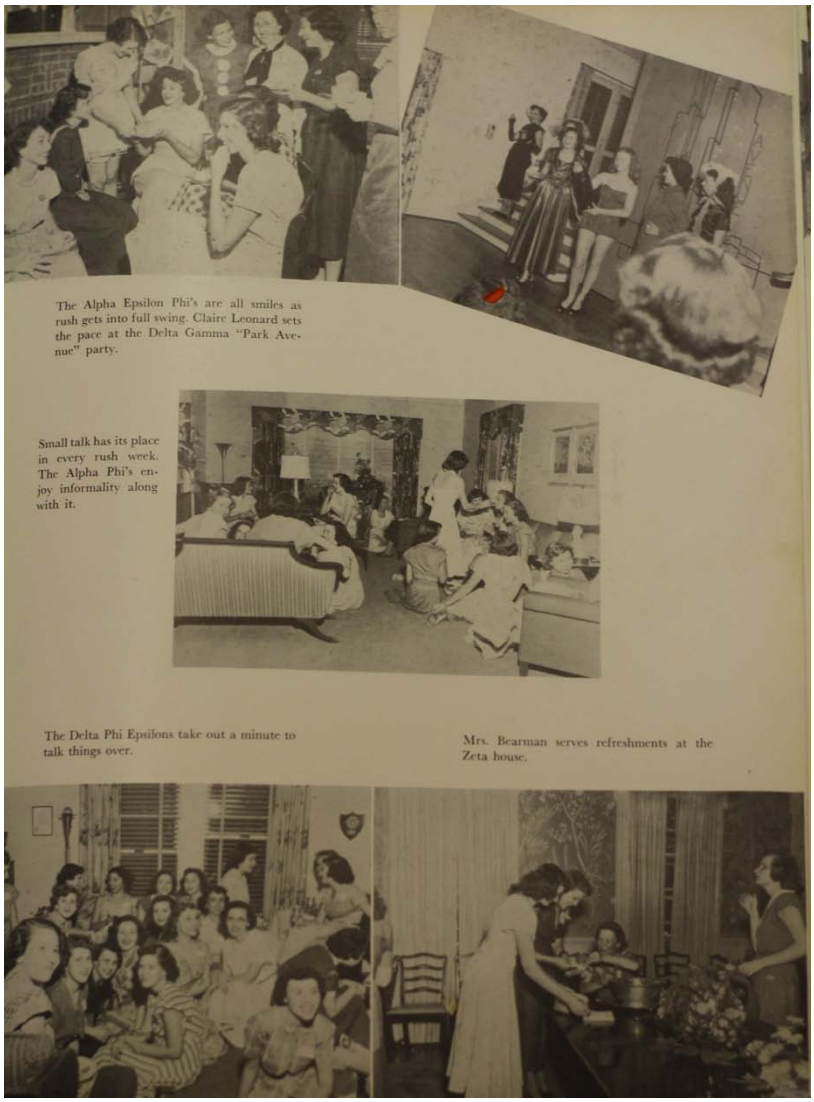
"If he doesn't go A.E.Pi I think I'm gonna' suffer from combat fatigue!

building community and relationships among brothers and potential pledges; the presence of the shirts and ties certainly indicates a level of formality and social class, especially when considering that nearly every single one of the men sports a tie; other photos do include men wearing ties, but not as uniformly as Greeks.

Similarly, the majority of the sororities' rush pictures show women gathering inside of sorority houses. Many picture women drinking refreshments and sitting together in crowded living rooms. One collage of photos features two separate photos, one from Alpha Epsilon Phi and another from Alpha Phi, of women sitting together eating cake and smiling at each other (Illustration 4). Another picture in the same collage reveals women from Delta Phi Epsilon crowded into a living room, smiling at the camera. A group of women in the back are sipping beverages and chatting with each other.[54] The women are all wearing tea-length dresses and have styled hair ranging in length from chin to below-the-shoulder, with the exception of a photo that includes women that appear to be costumed and putting on some sort of skit or performance. Like the men, there is an element of formality and the desire to project a certain level of social status. One of the photos pictures women at a Delta Gamma "Park Avenue" party, a social event themed around the upscale street in New York City, furthering the notion that Greeks had an elevated interest in the high-class and affluent. The women's fashion choices, as Ellen Melinkoff writes, reflect the shifting lifestyles of the 1950s

[54]Waddell and Osburn, 180.

Illustration 4: 1950 Sorority Rush Photo Collage. The 1950 *Cactus* shows sorority women spending time inside sorority houses. (*The Cactus.* Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1950, 180).



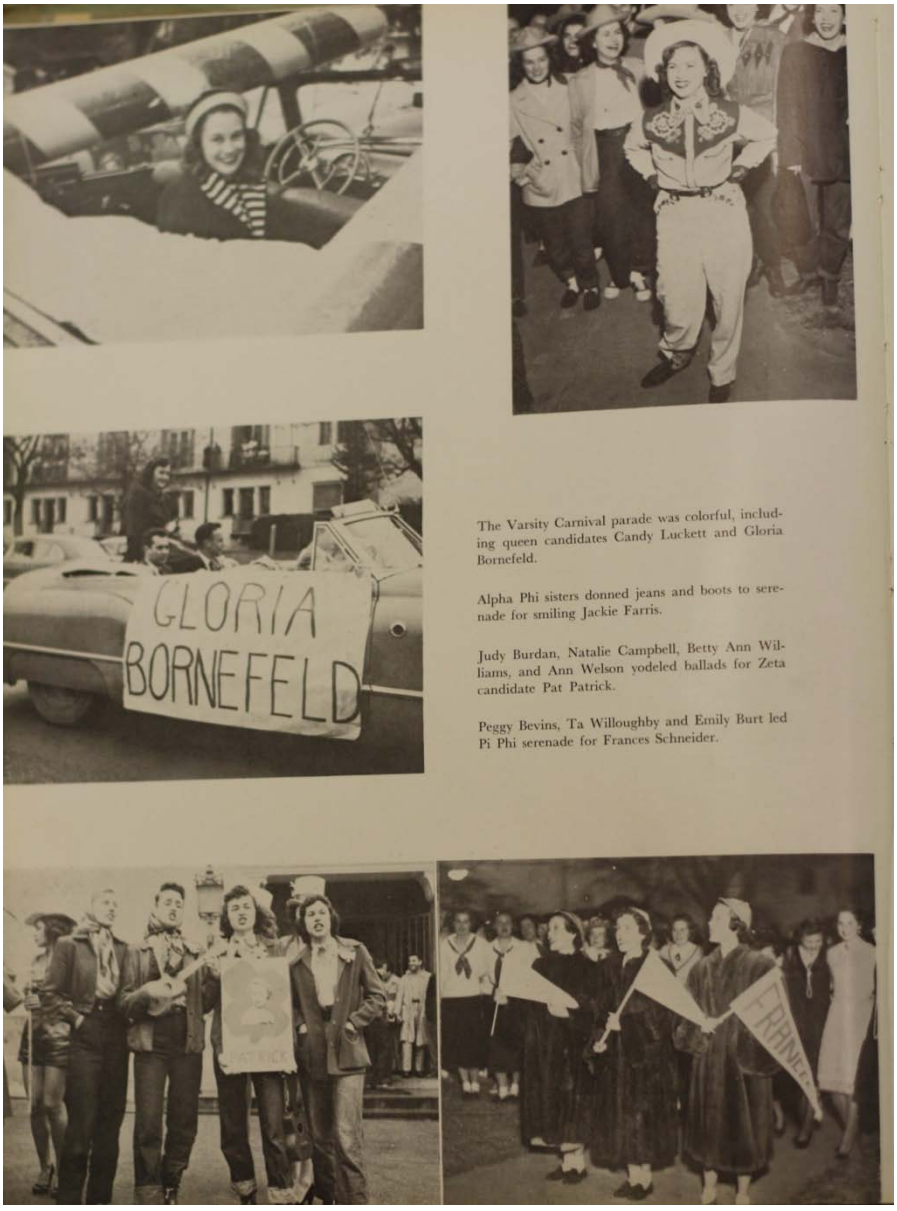
postwar years.[55] Like the fraternity photos, images taken inside of the house strengthen the reputation of Greeks as a tight-knit community, as opposed to shallowly-driven exclusive men and women, a reputation that will be discussed further later in this paper. While formal group photos in the *Cactus* are given their own section, labeled "Sororities and Fraternities," these shots are sprinkled throughout the general campus activity photographs. The photos indicate the wealth and materialism, and their position and frequency in the *Cactus* point to the Greeks' prestige on campus. Unlike later photos, there is no element of political polarization or conflict between the photos of Greeks and the other photos, beyond the clear projection that sororities and fraternities were at the center of campus life.

The 1950 *Cactus* also includes several pictures of Greeks participating in university-wide events and intermingling between chapters. Photos from Varsity Carnival, an annual campus-wide spirit event taking place in December, include several Greeks participating in the festivities. On one page, three of the four captions label the people in the photos as Greek. One picture includes a smiling woman at the forefront with her sisters from Alpha Phi standing behind her. Another photo features three Pi Beta Phi women leading a serenade for one of the Varsity Carnival queen candidates (Illustration 5).[56] These photos emphasize the campus involvement and leadership that

[55]Ellen Melinkoff, *What We Wore: An Offbeat Social History of Women's Clothing, 1950-1980* (New York: Quill, 1984), 20.

[56]Waddell and Osburn, 204.

Illustration 5: 1950 Sorority Campus Involvement Collage. Greeks are shown in the 1950 *Cactus* as leaders of campus involvement. (*The Cactus.* Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1950, 204).

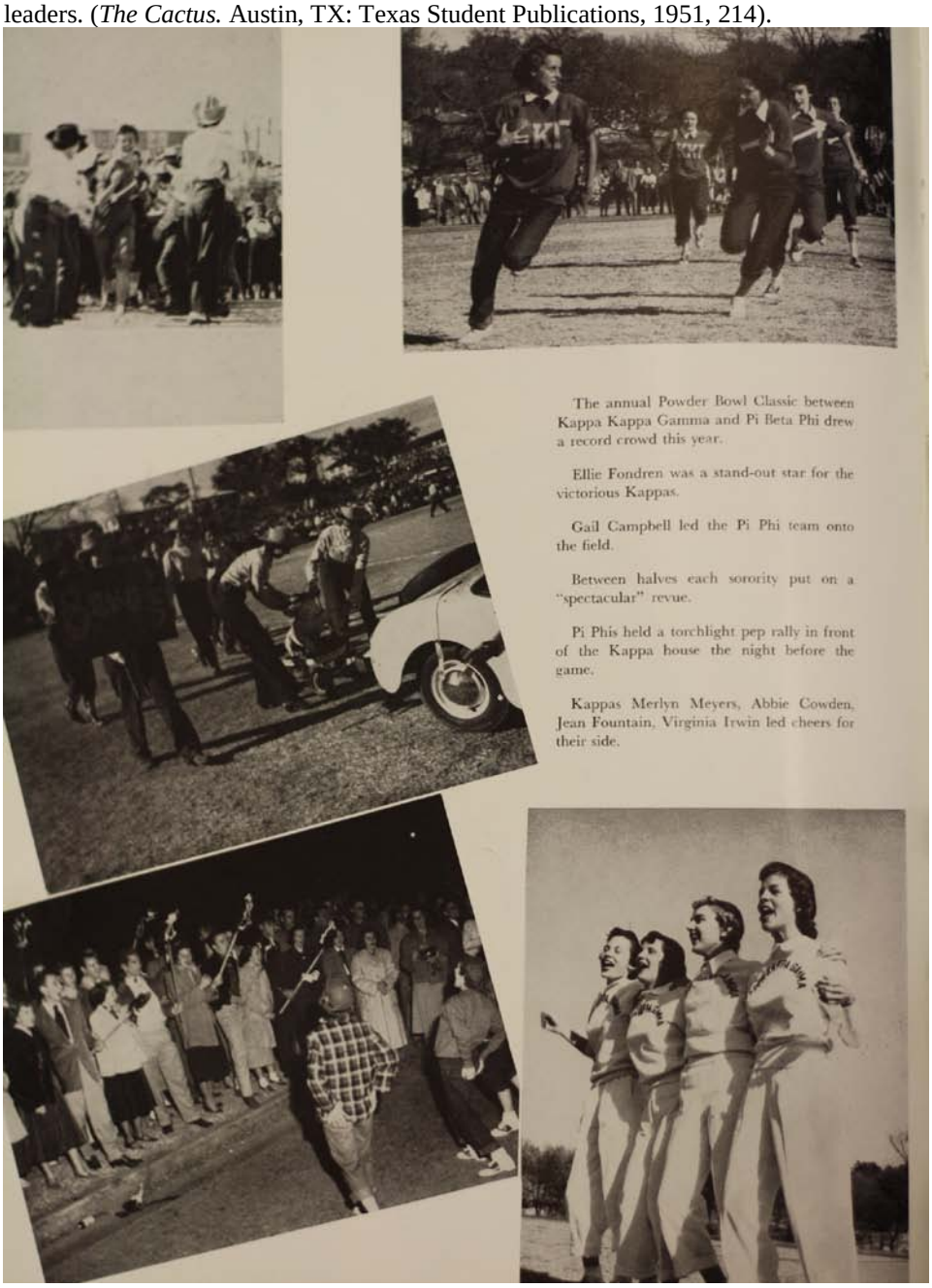


many Greeks saw as their reason for being a member of a fraternity or sorority. They also illustrate interaction between Greeks and non-Greeks, breaking down the idea that sorority and fraternity members only interact with each other. This idea is supported by the sprinkling of Greek photos throughout the yearbook candid photo sections, as mentioned previously.

By showing such a wide variety of photographs, several facets of Greek life are represented. Viewers of the *Cactus* see the sororities and fraternities interacting with the larger university student body, mixing with other Greeks, and bonding with their sisters and brothers in their own houses. A balance between involvement with organizations and the larger University of Texas campus conveys the message that Greek societies aid students in experiencing a well-rounded student experience. The representation of women and men spending time with their sisters and brothers is significant because it emphasizes the brotherhood and sisterhood that is supposedly the backbone of the Greek tradition. As a whole, the photos chosen for the *Cactus Yearbook* of 1950 illustrate the main positive elements of the community.

Continuing through 1955, photographs of fraternity and sorority members managed to balance these three major components of Greek life. The 1951 *Cactus* featured a series of photographs taken at the annual Powder Bowl Classic between Kappa Kappa Gamma and Pi Beta Phi (Illustration 6). The Classic was a huge women's football game that drew large attendance from the entire Greek community. The photos

Illustration 6: 1951 Powderbowl Classic Collage. Photos from the Powderbowl Classic in the 1951 *Cactus* illustrate a popular Greek-only event alongside photos of Greeks as campus leaders. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1951, 214).



The annual Powder Bowl Classic between Kappa Kappa Gamma and Pi Beta Phi drew a record crowd this year.

Ellie Fondren was a stand-out star for the victorious Kappas.

Gail Campbell led the Pi Phi team onto the field.

Between halves each sorority put on a "spectacular" revue.

Pi Phis held a torchlight pep rally in front of the Kappa house the night before the game.

Kappas Merlyn Meyers, Abbie Cowden, Jean Fountain, Virginia Irwin led cheers for their side.

of the game include an action shot of a Kappa woman carrying the ball, a Pi Beta Phi woman leading her team onto the field, the halftime revue performed by sorority women for the fraternity men, and Kappa women cheering for their side. The women playing football don uniforms of athletic shoes, dark pants, sweatshirts marked with their letters with collared shirts underneath, as do some of the women on the sidelines. These photos present an interesting inversion on the typical gender roles embraced by sororities and fraternities. The vast majority of all other photos of sorority women picture them in dresses with coifed hair. It seems, though, that rather than resisting the gender roles prescribed for them by society, this gender inversion is an attempt to gain the attention of men, in line with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's discussion of homosocial spaces in *Between Men*. Furthermore, the women's football games are quite clearly an isolated event designed for entertainment—entertainment for their male Greek counterparts. [57]

In 1955, each organization included a more informal photo alongside their formal group photo. While the organizations submitted candid photos to the *Cactus*, it is not clear whether the organizations chose the specific photo to be featured on their page. Regardless, these photos reflect the ways in which sororities and fraternities were presented by their own members and perceived by students at the University of Texas

[57]Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

Beth Osburn and Betty Bruce Bauman, eds. *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1951), 214.

who read the *Cactus*. Alpha Chi Omega pictured their women gathered in their living room being led by one of their sisters in practicing for Sing Song, the campus-wide singing competition (Illustration 7). Again, the women's hair is conservatively styled, and they are all wearing skirts. Many of them are wearing button-down blouses with cardigan sweaters, and a handful are sporting penny loafers with bobby socks. In comparison to other students in the *Cactus*, they are dressed in typical student attire.[58] Acacia's fraternity men were represented spending an entertaining night playing games and listening to music provided by a piano-playing brother (Illustration 8).[59] In this photo, the Acacians are showing a more laidback side of themselves. Their shirt collars are unbuttoned, and their sleeves are rolled up. Some of the men have selected plaid shirt patterns.[60] The women of Zeta Tau Alpha were shown having coffee together after chapter dinner in their house (Illustration 9). These photos effectively represent the more personal aspects of Greek life—though again, the personal aspect comes with the element of planned formality. All of the women are wearing dresses or skirts with dressier tops. The penny loafers remain a popular choice.[61] The submission of these photos provide evidence that Greeks wanted readers of the *Cactus* to see community, warmth, and the relationships between sisters and brothers when looking at the photos.

At the point when Greeks were no longer the hub of campus culture and had to

[58]Janice Bourdon and G. Claude Allen, eds. *The Cactus. (*Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1955), 424.

[59] Acacia is one of the few Greek organizations whose name is not Greek letters, but rather the name of a Greek tree.

[60]Bourdon and Allen, 461.

[61]Bourdon and Allen, 459.

Illustration 7: 1955 Sorority Singsong Candid Photo. The 1955 *Cactus* included this photo of Alpha Chi Omega women practicing for Sing Song alongside their official group photo. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1955, 424).

Illustration 8: 1955 Acacia candid photo. Acacians gather around for a leisurely afternoon of music and cards in the 1955 *Cactus. (The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1955, 461).

Illustration 9: 1955 Zeta Tau Alpha candid photo. Zeta Tau Alpha women are shown having after-dinner tea in the photo next to their official group portrait in the 1955 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1955, 459).

compete with other extracurricular groups, their public image and representation of that image began to change. The photographs chosen to represent the Greek community in the *Cactus Yearbook* from the late 1950s illustrate a newfound emphasis on material wealth, homogeneity, and organized, co-ed, social mixing, foreshadowing the political polarization of the sixties that marked Greeks as a more conservative, bourgeois group on campus.

By 1958, photos of Greeks featured more co-ed party shots and fewer images from inside of the house. A collage from the 1958 *Cactus* features four photos of fraternity men and sorority women at Greek-only social events (Illustration 10). One picture includes two Greek women and a Greek man, all labeled only by their organization letters at a Western party, another features two Zeta Tau Alpha women posed at Frattie Friend Night—an event that appears to be a social mixer, another is of two Greeks dancing at a party, and another shot shows a sorority woman in a formal gown and her Greek date in a tuxedo attending the Alpha Delta Pi formal. Two photos include groups of men at organized events—the Alpha Phi Omega Installation Banquet and a cocktail party preceding the Tau Kappa Epsilon formal.[62] The photos offer little insight into what the subjects are doing, other than the fact that they are at an organized gathering. Other than the gentlemen dining at the Installation Banquet, the photos are all relatively close-up and picture Greeks grouped together, often with arms around

[62]Laura Elizabeth Faulk and A.J. Toole, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1958), 425.

Illustration 10: 1958 Greek Collage. A collage in the 1958 *Cactus* emphasizes Greek-only social events. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1958, 425).

p Row: Alpha Tau Ome- and Pi Beta Phi have a estern Party.

One of the mechanics om the Jessie James Smith rvice Station repairing an .G. motor.

Ken Andrews, Brent mpkins and Tommy homas at the Alpha Phi mega Installation Banquet.

Center: The Longhorn Flying Club sponsors a Spot Landing Contest.

Claire Deckey, George Smith at the Alpha Tau Omega Party at Marshal Ford.

Gayle Hotmann, Doug Baker and Bill Hotmann at an ROTC gathering.

Bottom Row: The Zeta Tau Alpha's have their Frattic Friend night.

Students buy their supplies at Miller Blue Print.

Alpha Delta Pi Formal.

Don Whitley, Jay Thielen at a cocktail party preceeding the Tau Kappa Epsilon Formal.

each other, smiling at the camera. While three of the photos described picture only men or only women, the photos have started to move out of the living spaces of the house.

As a result, they lack the feeling of community, warmth, and brother or sisterhood that the in-house photos conveyed. Rather, the photos portray the Greek community as a large dating circle full of flirtatious men and women who make socializing with members of the opposite sex a priority. Furthermore, party pictures, particularly photos from formal dances, emphasize wealth and materialism by featuring Greeks dressed in formal clothing such as party dresses and suits and holding cocktails and alcoholic beverages, and move away from intimate, cozy photos of tightly-knit men playing cards together and women sipping tea. This trend of mixed gender groups at social events beginning in the late fifties, such as the photos discussed from the 1958 *Cactus,* continued to grow through the mid- to late sixties as more private pictures became less and less common.

When comparing the Rush photos from the sixties to those from the fifties, this change is extremely evident. The 1962 *Cactus* featured a large section on Rush, including eleven photos. While the 1950 Rush section focused on more intimate moments between brothers and sisters, the 1962 collages fail to emphasize this aspect of recruitment and Greek life. The majority of the photos portray the less intimate moments of the Rush period. A full-page photo illustrates Alpha Delta Pi's skit performance (Illustration 11). The women performing are dressed in matching costumes

Illustration 11: 1962 Sorority Rush Skit. Alpha Delta Pi's racially insensitive skit was shown in the 1962 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1962, 77).

and are “gyrating through” an exotic dance in their take-off on *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a performance that is as superficial and far from organizational bonding as it is racially insensitive; this choice of skit is stunning given the rising racial tension surrounding the Civil Rights movement and indicates a conservative political lean associated with the sorority’s identity.[63] In the same book, a photo pictures a large group of students participating in a “speak-in” at the tower following disciplinary action taken against African-Americans who participated in a demonstration at the racially segregated Kinsolving Hall (Illustration 12).[64]

While the Panhellenic women do not don blackface or actively project racism, their choice of skit demonstrates a lack of awareness or attention to racial issues that were so hotly debated by their fellow students. Also, in comparison to the photos of women cozying together in a comfortable living room, these photos do not place sisterhood at the center of Greek life. In the midst of a campus that was alive with the fight for racial equality, the Uncle Tom’s Cabin skit photo enforces the notion that sororities did not embrace the civil rights movement. The insensitivity of this dance at this moment in time is notable and points towards racist politics or at least an apathy towards those politics within Greek organizations.

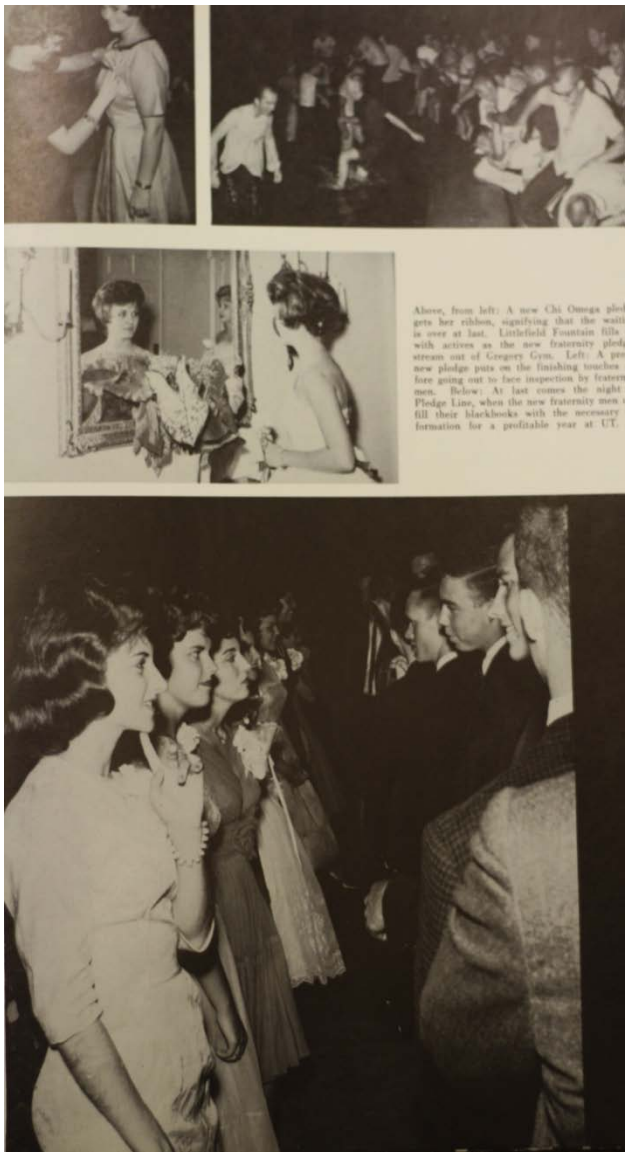
A pair of photos from the 1962 book reveals the traditional Pledge Line

[63]Rebecca Annette Wood and Donna Sue Nelson, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1962), 77.

[64] Wood and Nelson, 86-7.

Illustration 12: 1962 Campus Demonstration. A photo of a Civil Rights demonstration is included in the 1962 *Cactus*. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1962, 86-7).

Illustration 13: 1962 Pledgeline Photos. The 1962 *Cactus* brings back pledgeline photos. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1962, 79).



Above, from left: A new Chi Omega pled
gets her ribbon, signifying that the waiti
is over at last. Littlefield Fountain fills
with actives as the new fraternity pled
stream out of Gregory Gym. Left: A pro
new pledge puts on the finishing touches
fore going out to face inspection by fratern
men. Below: At last comes the night
Pledge Line, when the new fraternity men
fill their blackbooks with the necessary
formation for a profitable year at UT.

(Illustration 13). Pledge Lines were comprised of new sorority pledges wearing formal dresses. Fraternity men passed through the lines, getting their first glimpse and interaction of the newest women of the Greek community. One pledge line photo pictures a woman examining herself in a mirror before "going out to face inspection," according to the caption. The other pledge line photo features men walking through a line of smiling women, shaking hands and greeting them. The caption reads, "At last comes the night of Pledge Line, when the new fraternity men can fill their blackbooks with the necessary information for a "profitable" year at UT."[65] While pledge line photos were common in earlier yearbooks, they disappeared during the fifties. The pictures in the 1962 yearbook are no different from the earlier pledge line images, but their captions frame them in a significantly different way. Rather than presenting the pledge line as a social meet-and-greet, the 1962 captions portray pledge lines as a site for men to physically examine women and get dates for the upcoming year; "filling their blackbooks" implies an intention to line up a series of dates with multiple women, rather than a hope to meet someone with which to form a lasting friendship or romantic relationship. While this was not a choice on the part of the Greek community, captions such as these certainly further the notion that fraternity men and sorority women care more about their dating lives than their brother and sisterhoods; the captions both confirm a commonly-held idea at the time of publication as well as inform readers'

[65]Wood and Nelson, 79.

ideas from the point of publication on.

The existence of the pledgeline as well as its spotlight in yearbook photos indicates that the Greek community continued to embrace a heteronormative, dating-focused society, intent on setting up romantic relationships between sorority and fraternity members. In *The Feminine Mystique,* Betty Friedan claimed that college women in general went through school in the 1940s and 1950s impatiently waiting for "real" life—when they married and settled down to raise children in suburbia—to begin. Friedan also described women with a decreasing interest in education and colleges that were more concerned with preparing these women for playing the role of "wife." In *Homeward Bound,* Elaine Tyler May writes:

> Older professional women watched helplessly as early feminist gains were eroded. One woman, who was born in 1885 and was a professor of English at the University of Illinois until her retirement in 1954, wrote this about the college women of the late 40s and early 50s: "For those last ten years, I felt increasingly that something had gone wrong with our young women of college age…I think I was confident the will [for academic and professional success] was there—I knew the capacity was. But I was mistaken about the will.[66]

The *Cactus* photos of Greeks certainly dovetail with this idea; while pledgelines were not part of academic coursework, the images portray an element of collegiate Greek culture that existed solely to introduce men and women in order for them to date.[67]

As the years progressed, this trend increased. Fewer and fewer pictures of

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[66] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 70-1

[67] Friedan, 154.

brotherly and sisterly in-house bonding graced the pages of the *Cactus* Yearbook and were replaced by images of men and women at socials, formals, and the occasional campus event. A complete change in representation was confirmed when, in 1965, the candid photos paired with official group photos included only two images of men or women spending time with their own chapters. Furthermore, one of the two chapter-only photos features men participating in a Car Smash—a fundraiser for Dimes Day (Illustration 14). While the photo includes fraternity men together, it conveys a very different feel and image than the brothers gathered around a piano—one of rough, aggressive masculinity.[68] Other than these, all of the photos featured women and men together at Greek parties. Simultaneously, the yearbook was picturing non-Greek campus members participating in protests and pickets, hosting receptions for Black high school students, and participating in group forums about identity (Illustrations 15 and 16).[69] As liberal political action became more visible on campus, Greeks appear to become more superficial and driven by frivolity.

Yearbooks from the late 1960s continue this trend. The candid photo in 1966 for Zeta Tau Alpha features one woman surrounded by four men, and the caption reads, "The Zetas participated in fundraising activities for Campus Chest" (Illustration 17). Oddly, the photo the sorority chose to represent their women's organization has a men to women ratio of four to one, indicating a focus on interaction with men rather than the

[68] Susan Kay McGinness and Nancy Coleman Scott, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965), 275.

[69] McGinness and Scott, NP.

Illustration 14: 1965 Car Smash Photo. Fraternity members participate in a Car Smash in 1965. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 275).

Illustration 15: Racial Identity Forum. A photo shows Black and white students in a group forum about racial identity. *(The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, NP).

Illustration 16: 1965 Student Protest. The 1965 *Cactus* includes a photo of students picketing a racist business establishment. *(The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, NP).

Illustration 17: 1968 Sorority Fundraiser. In the 1968 *Cactus*, a photo of a Zeta sorority fundraiser includes more men than women. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1966, 270).

Illustration 18: *1968 Playboy Party*. The 1968 *Cactus* pictures a Phi Tau party themed after *Playboy*. (*1968 Cactus Yearbook.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications Inc. 1968, NP).

act of fundraising.[70] In 1968, a candid photo selected to represent Phi Tau pictures a woman receiving an invitation from a person dressed as a Playboy bunny, and two men dressed in tuxedos (Illustration 18). The woman in the clearly posed photo is smiling, though her face conveys a sort of ambivalence. The caption reads, "Appropriately dressed for their Playboy semi-formal, Phi Taus personally delivered invitations to dropees and pinees of chapter members." This photo presents an interesting juxtaposition. Certainly, a Playboy-themed party falls in step with the notion that sororities and fraternities were moving away from a wholesome image.[71] As Barbara Ehrenreich discusses in *Hearts of Men, Playboy* hated wives and embraced large-breasted, long-legged women; it allowed even the most conventional reader to envision themselves as "playboys."[72] With the Playboy semi-formal, the fraternity men were clearly channeling the suave, debonair upscale image of virility that Hugh Hefner was selling to a mass audience. However, they are delivering the invitations to dropees and pinees, women who are in serious relationships with fraternity members—serious enough to be given a drop—a dangling necklace charm—or a pin bearing the Greek letters of her boyfriend's fraternity; in most organizations, the act of sharing letters is considered a mark of serious commitment, almost like an engagement. Therefore, these

[70]Reeder, 270.

[71]Lafe D. Hill and Jim Kemp. *1968 Cactus Yearbook* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications Inc. 1968), NP.

[72] Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (New York: Anchor Press, 1983), 43.

"playboys" are ironically delivering invitations to their girlfriends. Their choice of party theme suggests that the men desire the image that a *Playboy* party conveys but their relationship statuses indicate a more conservative, committed lifestyle.

In the 1970 *Cactus*, there was a slight resurgence of in-house photos with same-sex subjects, however the content of the photos still indicates a dating-focused, bourgeois lifestyle. The Alpha Delta Pi yearbook page displays women holding bouquets of flowers, the caption reading, "On Valentine's Day, ADPi's gathered to admire one another's flowers" (Illustration 19). The women are no longer as formally dressed. Several wear dresses, but one woman is wearing a t-shirt.[73] The Gamma Phi Beta photo features women "gathered around the television after classes for the next episode in their favorite soap opera" (Illustration 20) These women appear to be dressed stylishly; they are put-together, but not overly formal.[74]

Fraternities' photos echoed the trend. The majority of the groups' candid photos come from co-ed, party events. Delta Chi's photos show the men playing football with dates, going sailing, and sitting on a car in the country drinking beer (Illustrations 21 and 22).[75] The photo for Sigma Alpha Mu in the 1970 book pictures Sammys and dates "enjoy[ing] the Viet Cong party held at the house;" the photo is taken from a high perspective, looking down through leafy branches at several men and women

[73] Joy Stapp and Pat Cafferty. *Cactus*: *Nineteen Hundred Seventy* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970), NP.

Stapp and Cafferty, 328-9.

[74]Stapp and Cafferty, 352-3.

[75]Stapp and Cafferty, 378-9.

Illustration 19: 1970 Alpha Delta Pi Candid Photo. Alpha Delta Pi sisters admire gifts from their boyfriends in a 1970 *Cactus* photo. (*Cactus: Nineteen Hundred Seventy.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970, 328-9).

Illustration 20: 1970 Gamma Phi Beta Candid Photo. The 1970 *Cactus* pictures Gamma Phi Beta women catching up on the latest soap opera. (*Cactus: Nineteen Hundred Seventy.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970, 352-3).

Illustration 21: Delta Chi Candid Photos Left Page. (*Cactus: Nineteen Hundred Seventy.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970, 378).

Delta Chi

Helping underprivileged children in the Austin area, Delta Chi presented a bond to the Pan American League to help finance its football program.

The local chapter of Delta Chi participated in several intramural sports this year. Among these were bowling, badminton, handball, volleyball, and wrestling.

Delta Chi's fall social season included the annual Ski Lodge party, the Christmas Ball, film parties, and aftergame get-togethers. The spring socials which highlighted the year were the Round-Up party and a banquet at The Barn.

Fall officers were Robert Dwain Blakley, president; Randall Edward Rowan, vice-president; William Mike Johnson, recording secretary; Karl Bonawit Putnam, treasurer; and Edward Anthony Kaufman, corresponding secretary.

In the spring semester leadership was furnished by William Mike Johnson, president; Edward Anthony Kaufman, vice-president; Jerome Thomas Blakley, recording secretary; Karl Bonawit Putnam, treasurer; and Randall Edward Rowan, corresponding secretary.

Delta Chi's and their dates played a game of touch football.

Illustration 22: Delta Chi Candid Photos Right Page. The 1970 *Cactus* includes photos of Delta Chi brothers sailing and socializing on car hoods while drinking beer. (*Cactus: Nineteen Hundred Seventy*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970, 379).

Illustration 23: 1970 Viet Cong Party. A Greek Viet Cong party photo is included in the 1970 *Cactus.* (*Cactus: Nineteen Hundred Seventy*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, Inc. 1970, 415).

(Illustration 23). They are laughing together and decked out in camouflage, facepaint, aviator glasses, and helmets. During a time when student protestors were demanding that the US leave Vietnam and organizing a "March of Death" on the UT campus, carrying a coffin to represent war casualties, making light of the United States' presence in Vietnam by theming a war party sets the Greeks apart from the growing antiwar student movement. Sororities and fraternities' conservative tendencies indicate that they would support the Vietnam war, but dressing as soldiers and decorating a party space to make it resemble a jungle quite obviously makes light of a war that many people saw as tragic and wrong, and the Viet Cong party also disrespected the efforts of those students that positioned themselves with the New Left.[76] Greek photographs' movement towards more superficial social interaction is in stark contrast to photographs of non-Greeks. Parties, formals, and other social events have come to be staples of the Greek lifestyle. In 1968, students were pictured in a march carrying signs demanding that the "US get out of Vietnam NOW" (Illustration 24).[77] In 1969, a caption for a photo of an antiwar protest reads, "Protestors fled toward the capitol as riot-equipped Austin police lobbed tear gas canisters" (Illustration 25).[78] The photo features at least eleven police officers standing with their backs to the camera, and people are seen running through clouds of gas.

[76]Stapp and Cafferty, 415.
[77] Hill and Kemp, NP.
[78] Karolyn Karr, ed. *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1969) 130.

Illustration 24: 1968 Student Protest. Students in 1968 are shown at an anti-war demonstration. (*1968 Cactus Yearbook*, Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications Inc. 1968, NP).

Illustration 25: 1969 Police and Anti-War Protestors. In a 1969 *Cactus* photo, Austin police throw tear gas canisters at anti-war protestors. (*The Cactus*, Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1969, 130).

Thus far, this report has revolved primarily around white Greeks at the University of Texas. The Black Greek community nationwide is a topic that is worthy of much analysis and critique, however due to extremely limited representation of the University of Texas NPHC organizations in the *Cactus* and other printed primary sources, it is outside the scope of this project. The candid photos of the Black Greek organizations are difficult to analyze, as they appear to repeat from year to year. This indicates that either the Black organizations did not submit candid photos, were not given the opportunity to submit new photos each year, or were not given the editing attention required to make a change in the organizations' representation from year to year. The photos that are included picture a mix of fraternity members participating in intramurals, women leading a meeting, putting on a skit, attending a formal dance and gathering at parties. Black Greek organizations do not represent themselves as affiliated with any sort of political movement, but their appearances do not project the same conformity and exclusivity as the white organizations (Illustrations 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30).[79] Unlike the IFC and UPC groups, there are only a handful of NPHC candid photos, in part due to their late arrival to the UT campus and in part due to the apparent lack of attention to their representation in the yearbooks, either from the groups

[79]Reeder, 236.
Reeder, 279.
McGinness and Scott, 246-7.
McGinness and Scott, 231.
McGinness and Scott, 247.

themselves in a failure to submit photos or from the editors in their choice not to update the photos from year to year. Certainly, Black Greeks lack of presence in *Cactus* photos, even in photos that picture large events with members of multiple Greek organizations, indicate a separation between Black and white Greeks.

Illustration 26: Black Greek Formal Dance. Black Greeks socialize at a formal dance in the *Cactus*. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1966, 236).

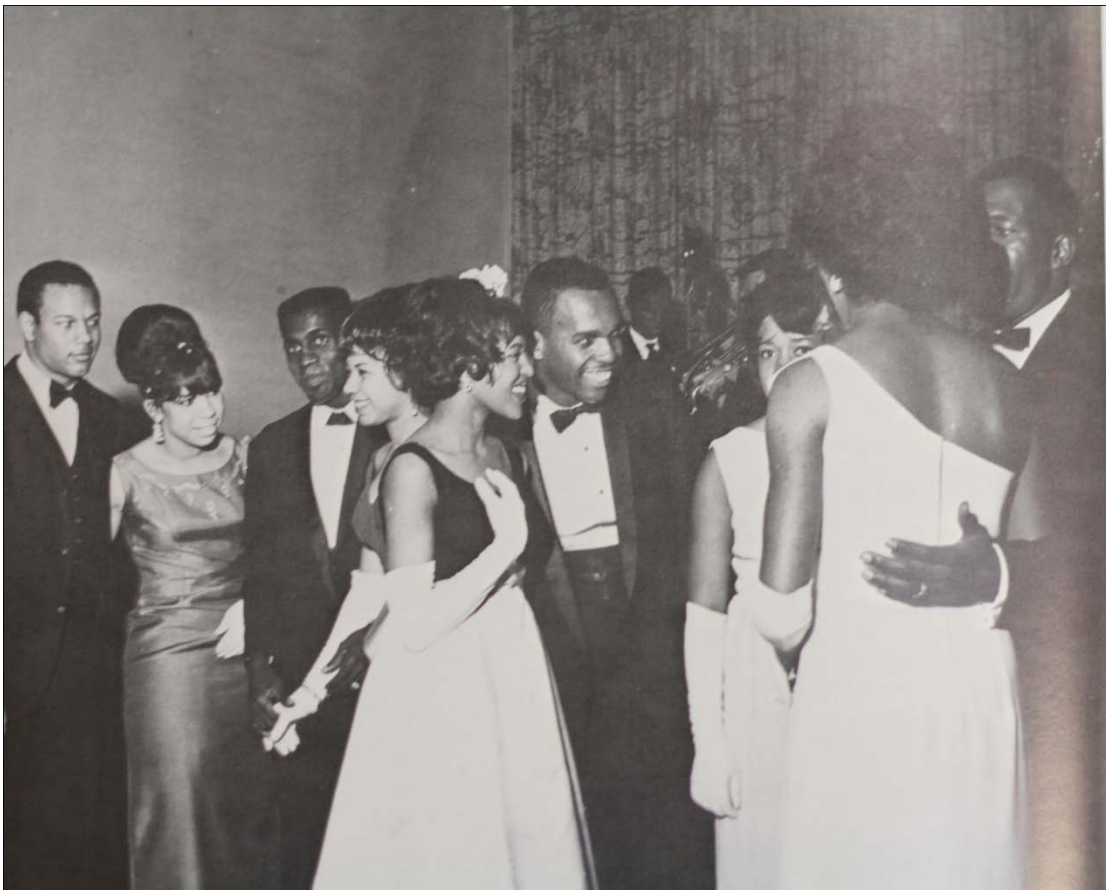

Illustration 27: Alpha Phi Alpha Intramural Photo. Alpha Phi Alpha brothers are shown participating in intramural sports. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1966, 279).

Illustration 28: Black Sorority Rush Meeting. Black sorority women participate in a rush meeting. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 246-7).

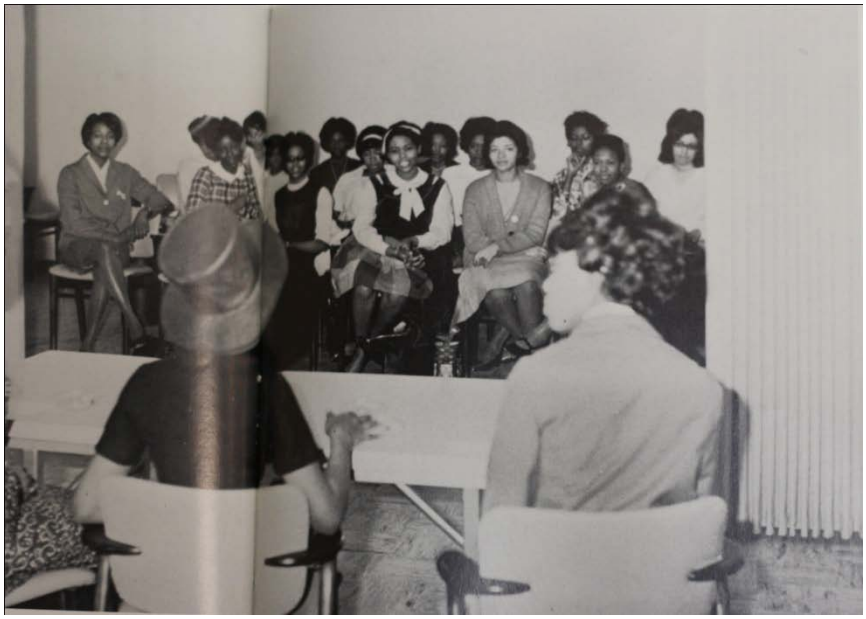

Illustration 29: Black Sorority Women in Sweaters. Black sorority women pose at a party wearing their sorority sweaters. (*The Cactus*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 231).

Illustration 30: Delta Sigma Theta Rush Skit. Women from Delta Sigma Theta are shown performing a skit during rush. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 247).

Chapter 10: Changes in the *Cactus*: Towards Visual Homogeneity

Fraternities' and sororities' group photos provide another site to examine the ways Greeks represented themselves in the *Cactus Yearbook*. Between 1945 and 1970, these photos changed dramatically. Candid photos of Greeks moved from private to public, and group photos shifted towards a visual representation of homogeneity. While the change was more extreme in women's pictures, by 1970, group photos of fraternities and sororities used clothing and jewelry to manipulate the groups' apparent uniformity.

Fraternities and sororities have included group photos in the *Cactus* since 1895. The majority of non-Greek student groups typically pose as a group on risers or stairs, a practice that has remained constant throughout the duration of the yearbook's publication. If the group traditionally wears a uniform, such as military groups and musical groups, they wear the uniform in the picture. In contrast to non-Greek groups, fraternities and sororities began submitting individual portraits of each member in the 1910s; other organizations continued to submit photos of all members standing in a group. These photos were published in the *Cactus* in a section marked "Fraternities and Sororities," separate from all other student organizations and occupying twenty to twenty-five percent of the *Cactus*. This section, along with all other student organization sections, was printed in black and white through the entire scope of this project, as were all of the candid photos of students. Color photos in the mid- to late sixties were reserved for campus Sweethearts and Bluebonnets, the winners of campus-sponsored, all-girl, pageant-like

competitions, and floats from the Round-Up parade, a celebration that kicks off Round-Up weekend, a Texas tradition that resembles a homecoming.

Fraternity photos in the mid-forties featured individual portraits of men, usually wearing a suit coat, button-up shirt, and tie. There was little consistency between color and pattern of coat or tie, and fraternity members who were in the military wore their uniforms. As late as 1951, groups apparently made no specifications as to the color or type of suit and tie members should wear in their pictures, other than the standard jacket and tie. The 1951 *Cactus* group photo of Phi Kappa Tau features men in light and dark jackets and printed and solid bow ties and long neckties (Illustration 31). All of the men in the organization are white and all have similar short, clean-cut hairstyles.[80] While the group appears as uniform, they maintain slight differences in their dress.

By 1956, the same year that candid photos began to shift from private house photos to less intimate photographs of co-ed socials, fraternities began to appear more uniform in their group portraits. Delta Upsilon's 1956 photo features only a few men wearing coats that are not a dark, solid color (Illustration 32). All of the men don long neckties and share the same hairstyle.[81] Other white fraternity group photos are similar. The pattern continues through 1965 and group photos today are very similar. It is

[80]Beth Osburn and Betty Bruce Bauman, *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1951), 253.

[81]James Van Richards and Luverne Mitchell, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1956), 294.

Illustration 31: 1951 Phi Kappa Tau Group Photo. Phi Kappa Tau's group portrait in the 1951 *Cactus* includes men in varying jackets and ties. (*The Cactus,* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1951, 253).

Illustration 32: Delta Upsilon 1956 Group Photo. Delta Upsilon's group photo in the 1956 *Cactus* includes only a few men wearing coats that are not dark, and all members wear long neckties and have the same hairstyle. (*The Cactus*, Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1956, 294).

difficult to pinpoint the extent to which fashion impacted men's growing similarity in dress. However, the appearance of fifty to one hundred men dressed in similar clothing certainly presents a picture of white, upper-middle class homogeneity, despite any differences that might exist between members, fitting Dorothy Burlage's description of UT when she attended in the late 1950. She said, "For many [liberal students], Texas was a sea of conformity, and the university was, in general, simply an extention of that culture==the "football, beer-drinking culture."[82]

Women's group photos present a much more obvious shift towards visual conformity. By 1946, most sorority women dressed similarly in their group photographs. The 1946 *Cactus* photo of Delta Gamma features individual portraits of each woman (Illustration 33). The women are wearing sweaters of all different colors, and each is wearing a white collared shirt underneath the sweater. The women's hairstyles vary and some are wearing jewelry.[83] In 1951, most groups chose to wear clothing similar in both color and style. The women of Alpha Omicron Pi all wore button-down blouses of a similar color (Illustration 34). The shirts vary slightly in the style of collar and some shirts have gathers across the shoulders while others do not. Many women are wearing pearl necklaces, though the necklaces are different lengths,

[82] Rossinow, 38

[83]Margaret M. Conrad and Earl Herring, eds. *The Cactus* (Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1946), 216.

Illustration 33: 1946 Delta Gamma Group Photo. Delta Gamma's 1946 *Cactus* photo shows women wearing different colored sweaters, with different hairstyles, and with different jewelry and accessories. (*The Cactus,* Austin, Texas: Texas Student Publications, 1946, 216).

Illustration 34: 1951 Alpha Omicron Pi Group Photo. The women of Alpha Omicron Pi wear matching blouses in the 1951 yearbook, though their hairstyles and jewelry choices differ. (*The Cactus*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1951, 183-4).

and one member is wearing large white earrings.[84] This was the case in most of the photos; women wore similar clothing, but there was slight but noticeable variation in color and style. Through this time period, the Greeks appear to dress as most students do at UT. The general style of dress is fairly uniform and conservative, but they take visual conformity to an extreme.

In 1957, the first group photo of women in identical clothing appeared. The women of Gamma Phi Beta are pictured wearing identical shirts with white ruffled collars (Illustration 35). The women are wearing no jewelry.[85] By 1963, this was common practice. Many groups such as Kappa Kappa Gamma, Gamma Phi Beta, and Kappa Alpha Theta clothed their women in cape-like robes that covered their clothing. The women all have similar hairstyles, and none of them are wearing noticeable jewelry.

The most striking example of a women's group photo from 1963 is of the Delta Delta Delta sorority, otherwise known as Tri-Delt. Nearly every woman in the picture has her hair cut into a short, stylish bob (Illustration 36). The women are all white, as was characteristic of nearly all Greek organizations in the Panhellenic and Interfraternal Councils.[86] In this photo, every woman has chin-length hair, cut into a bob. They are all

[84]Osburn and Bauman, 183-4.

[85]John Thomas Stuart, Shirley Rae Rylander, and Judith Ann Reed, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1957), 313-4.

[86]By this point, National Pan-Hellenic Council had become common at many college campuses. NPHC fraternities and sororities were founded by African Americans and existed to provide support for Black students as they experienced discrimination and oppression at universities. For more information on

Illustration 35: 1957 Gamma Phi Beta Group Photo. In 1957, Gamma Phi Beta women dressed identically in their group photo. (*The Cactus*, Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1957, 313-4).

the history of these organizations, *The Divine Nine: The History of African-American Fraternities and Sororities* by Lawrence C. Ross.

Illustration 36: 1963 Delta Delta Delta Group Photo. The women of Delta Delta Delta label themselves with their letters in the 1963 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus*, Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1963, 217-8).

wearing the same white shirt. Unlike most other group photos, the women's shirts are marked with their letters, which are printed onto a tie hanging from their collars.[87] The women literally label the identical clothing with the name of their organization as if to say, "I am a Tri-Delt and you will know that by looking at me." This photo, along with the group photos of Kappa Kappa Gamma, Gamma Phi Beta, and Kappa Alpha Theta, presents the organization as a completely homogeneous group, a trend that remained consistent through 1970. Within the group, each member would most certainly acknowledge differences in members of the organization. However, in photos, they choose to represent themselves as a unified group in which all members share values, lifestyles, and appearance. This enforces the stereotype that sororities and fraternities require the conformity of all members. It also conveys the idea that Greek organizations are exclusive and only accept people that can physically fit in with their members. This sort of representation differentiates the Greek student groups from other student groups, fostering a divide, and as a result, isolation.

Interestingly, Black Greeks did not take conformity to the same extreme as their white counterparts. In the 1962 *Cactus*, members of Alpha Kappa Alpha are pictured wearing identical clothing, but their hairstyles vary (Illustration 37).[88] They are also posed at slightly different angles, minimizing the cookie-cutter image projected by the

[87]Lester Loyd Edmonds and Frankie Mae Lindsey, eds., *The Cactus* (Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1963), 217-8.

[88] Wood and Nelson, 182.

Illustration 37: 1962 Alpha Kappa Alpha Group Photo. Alpha Kappa Alpha women were included in the 1962 *Cactus*, marking the first time a Black Greek group photo was included in the yearbook. *(*The Cactus, *Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1962, 182).*

white sororities. The 1966 Alpha Phi Alpha photo shows men with similar haircuts, but they wear visibly different suit jackets (Illustration 38).[89]

Putting this conformity of white fraternities and sororities into historical context, the IFC and UPC Greeks' clothing choices present a stark juxtaposition to the free-flowing hippie movement that was emerging in the sixties. The sorority and fraternity members pictured in the yearbooks in matching robes and uniform jewelry were a far cry from the young hippies that had appeared in US cities by the late sixties; while sorority women were donning pearls, hippies were living in "voluntary poverty, refugees from the "at least modern comfort" of their social class."[90] Rather, the Greeks appear to be embracing the conservative, upper-crust gender roles delineated for them by a society the leftists had deemed repressive. There is nothing complex about their identities, at least when analyzing their photographs; the photos mask any differences between members of the organizations. Logic would suggest that the groups were far more heterogeneous than these images suggest. However, when viewing a page filled with one hundred smiling faces of women with identical haircuts, jewelry, and clothing, the implication is that the category of "Greek" simply needs to be filled in with the appropriate components of race, social class, and ethnicity, and any divergence from these norms will not be tolerated.

[89]Reeder, 279.
[90] Rossinow, 279

Illustration 38: 1966 Alpha Phi Alpha Group Photo. Alpha Phi Alpha men were included in the 1966 *Cactus,* the first time Black Greek men were pictured in a group portrait. (*The Cactus,* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1966, 279).

Chapter 11: One Cause of the Change: The Role of Greeks in Extra-Curricular Activities on Campus

I have established that between 1945 and 1970, photographs of Greek-letter societies in the *Cactus Yearbook* changed dramatically. The photos moved from picturing more private, intimate events shared by members of individual organizations alongside photos of interaction with both the larger college campus and other fraternities and sororities to a heavy focus on co-ed, Greek-only social events. As the photographs of Greeks changed, photos of non-Greek organizations remained, and photos representing the political turmoil taking place in the United States were added. Photos of protests and sit-ins are included in the yearbooks, indicating the political activity and, by extension, polarization that was predominant in the sixties.

I argue that the isolated change in the photographic representation of Texas Greeks was a response in part to the rise in extra-curricular activities and student life. As Margaret Berry points out, student groups, both Greek and non-Greek, were growing increasingly popular during the 1950s.[91] As universities began to foster extra-curricular student activity, this became the case across the country. In 1961, Hall T. Sprague wrote that the purely academic part of the university may be "either sickly or, alas dead." He cited a struggle between what students are supposedly at college to achieve and what they actually achieve there. In his opinion, extra-curricular activities

[91]Berry, *UT History 101: Highlights of the University of Texas*, 82-5.

had come to substitute for academic activities.[92] In 1957, E.G. Williamson encouraged students to blend their learning with extra-curricular activities. He writes, "Learning of importance can take place in the extra-curriculum without destroying the "fun" character of activities."[93]

The new emphasis on extra-curricular was bolstered by growing support from the universities themselves. University staff positions were put in place to help students develop extra-curricular activities. In "A Half Century of Change in the State University," J.W. Ashton writes that before World War II, the social life of the student was provided by class functions and the activities of literary societies. By 1959, newly developed guidance and counseling programs were designed to develop extra-curricular as well as curricular interests.[94] Universities' changing admissions standards also fostered this growth in extra-curricular activities. According to one article, college admissions committees sought out students that had shown leadership in one or two extra-curricular activities. Rather than looking to winning athletic teams and large activities programs, universities sought students who were devoted to personal physical fitness, good study habits, and individual excellence in one or two "wisely chosen activities," an indicator of Cold War education culture and the National Defense Education Act, a bill that focused on improving math, science, and foreign language

[92]Hall T. Sprague, "Academic, vs. Non-academic Activities," *The Journal of Higher Education* 32 (1961), 407.

[93] E.G. Williamson, "Learning versus Fun in College," *The Journal of Higher Education* 28 (1957), 425.

[94]J.W. Ashton, "A Half-Century of Change in the State University," *The Journal of Higher Education* 30 (1959), 188-9.

instruction and nothing more.[95] Admiral Hyman Rickover testified in support of the bill, claiming, "[E]ducation is more important than the Army, the Navy, or the Air Force, or even the Atomic Energy Commission."[96] As universities focused on admitting students who had exhibited a previous interest in extra-curricular activities, student bodies were comprised of more and more students who were dedicated to participating in focused and specialized extra-curriculars during college.

This caused a need for historically white Greeks to redefine themselves as different from other student groups and capitalize on what made them unique. They chose to emphasize their wealth through photos of the facades of their homes and pictures of formal dances and their plethora of social events. They also chose to focus on exclusivity by including several photos of events that only Greeks could attend. Group photos in which all members looked alike reinforced their exclusive image—people could only be members if they fit the visual mold. They also chose to capitalize on their status as homogeneous groups.

This change was made easier because white Greek organizations were strongly established both historically and financially. By the time that non-Greek extra-curricular activities were prevalent on campus, sororities and fraternities no longer relied on the support of the general student body or the university itself due to their

[95]Andrew L. Pincus, "What the Colleges Want from the High Schools: Well-Rounded Individuals or Well-Grounded Students?" *The Journal of Higher Education* 31 (1960), 263-5.

[96] Andrew Hartman, *Education and Cold War: The Battle for the American School* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 185.

choice not to register as official university organizations.[97] Fraternities and sororities had established a base of potential new members. In many cases, high school students attended Round-Up, an event that occurred during Texas Relay Weekend that served as both a Homecoming and a time for Greeks to begin recruiting high school students. Therefore, many students began college knowing whether or not they wanted to be Greek. The sons and daughters, even grandsons and granddaughters of members from earlier years were attending the University of Texas with plans to join the organizations that their parents and grandparents had joined; this is known as legacy, and when a "legacy" comes through the recruitment system at the beginning of the school year, they are often given priority when organizations are considering which prospective members are extended a bid to join a group. As a result, sororities and fraternities had time-tested reputations, and no longer needed to appeal to the general UT student body.

Simultaneously, the shift was bolstered by the growth of conservatism in the 1950s and 1960s. The conservative, traditional ideas of the right were taking hold among highly educated men and women in the United States. As Lisa McGirr writes in *Suburban Warriors*, "[Conservatives] recast the party of Lincoln from the moderate Republicanism of the eastern Wall Street establishment into a southern and western mold of a far more conservative bent."[98] The conservative nature of sororities and fraternities fit neatly into this trend, pitting them against the visible liberal movement

[97]Berry, *UT History 101: Highlights of the History of the University of Texas*, 86.

[98]Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton University: Princeton, NJ, 2002), 4-8.

on campus.

Chapter 12: Another Cause of the Change: Politics on the College Campus

In the late sixties, information in the *Cactus* Yearbook confirms Rossinow's assertion that as the University of Texas saw a growing, predominantly liberal movement on campus, Greek organizations remained definitively conservative. Male organizations hosted parties themed after the Vietnam War, a political issue that was at the heart of so many on-campus political protests. The Greeks based a social event around such a raw issue for so many of their peers. In 1966, a photo is included of members of Kappa Alpha Order delivering party invitations to the South Ball, the capstone event of their Old South Week, by horseback parade, wearing Confederate army uniforms, an act that opposed any civil rights movements fighting racism (Illustration 39).[99] In 1968, Acacia featured a photo from their "Hippie party," clearly a direct mockery of the liberal hippie movement and an unspecified fraternity was represented by photos from a "Protest Party" (Illustration 40). Importantly, students attending the "Hippie Party" and "Protest Party" are dressed nothing like their fellow collegiates who were part of the leftist hippie and protest movements. While they are snapping their fingers and holding up "peace" signs, the women's hair is cut into bobs and one woman is sporting a striped turtleneck and jumper, clearly setting themselves apart from the leftist hippie and protest communities.[100]

Furthermore, beginning in 1966, fraternities and sororities listed leadership

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99 Reeder, 296.
100 Hill and Kemp, 378, 419.

Illustration 39: 1966 Alpha Kappa Order Old South Week. Members of the Kappa Alpha Order don Confederate uniforms in the 1966 *Cactus*, displaying blatant racism and providing a stark juxtoposition to the concurrent Civil Rights protest on campus. (*The Cactus*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1966, 296).

Illustration 40: 1968 Acacia Protest Party. Acacia throws a Protest Party. The photo in the 1968 *Cactus* illustrates that the Greeks attending this party were a far cry from hippies of the time. (*1968 Cactus Yearbook*. Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1968, 176).

positions and campus involvement of their members on their organizations' pages. In 1966, common activities listed included College Business Administrators, College Republicans, the Texas Union Council, varsity sports, and outstanding cadets and midshipmen from the Army, Navy, and Air Force Officer Training corps of junior and senior rank.[101] In 1968, common activities of sorority and fraternity members included Mortar Board, an academic honor society, the Spooks and the Orange Jackets, both spirit organizations comprised of women, Texas Cowboys and the Silver Spurs, both men's spirit organizations, and varsity athletics, and College Republicans.[102] Notably absent are any leftist political organizations. In fact, the leftists protested at least one Cowboys' event, criticizing the racism in the Cowboys' traditional black-faced minstrel shows, an event that was pictured in the 1965 *Cactus*. Picketers are shown with signs and the caption reads, "Demonstrators protested the use of black faces in Cowboy Minstrels" (Illustration 41). A second photo on the page shows members of the Cowboys in blackface; one man is riding another's shoulders while a third follows (Illustration 42).[103] The minstrel show, the main annual event of the Cowboys, is blatantly racist. While College Republicans deserved mention, white Greeks either rejected liberal political organizations completely or their membership was not deemed worthy of reference in the groups' campus involvement lists. Furthermore, membership

[101]Reeder and Cooke, 273-338.
[102] Hill and Kemp, 351-419.
[103] McGinniss and Scott, 176.

Illustration 41: 1965 Cowboy Minstrel Protest. Protestors picket the racist blackface entertainment featured in the Cowboy minstrel show, pictured in the 1965 *Cactus.* (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 176).

Illustration 42: 1965 Cowboy Minstrel Show. On the same page as the protest photos, the Cowboys are shown in blackface during their minstrel show. (*The Cactus.* Austin, TX: Texas Student Publications, 1965, 231).

in a group directly opposed by anti-racism activists is touted by multiple white fraternities.

Sororities did not include such blatantly anti-progressive photos or lists of activities; however, their photos indicate a clear alignment with fraternities as a social group on campus and a leap can easily be made to the conclusion that they shared similar political views or at least remained neutral on the prominent issues that were pervading their college campus. This was a commonality between all fraternities and sororities regardless of religious affiliation; even when the *Cactus* included African-American organizations in 1965 and on, there was no indication of any leftist political involvement.

Representations of Greeks and reports on sororities and fraternities in the Austin's underground paper, *The Rag*, solidify this notion that white fraternities and sororities were on the opposite side of liberal social movement. *The Rag* was established in part due to a perceived rightward turn in *The Daily Texan*, the University of Texas's student newspaper, so while it was not officially tied to the university, it included discussion of sororities and fraternities. The January 2, 1967 edition includes two articles that focus on fraternity members. One describes members of Delta Tau Delta who attacked a pacificist, presumably a hippie, tying him up, holding him down, and shaving his head.[104] In the same issue, an article opens with the sentence,

[104] "Letters to the Funnel," *The Rag*, Jan. 2, 1967, 2.

> The most immediate hostile force the Austin hippy faces is, of course, that obnoxious product of Instant Social Life, The Frat Rat. Those of us who are veterans of the long-hair are all familiar with the threats, insults, and beer bottles thrown from The Speeding G.T.O., or from The Stopped-Short C.T.O…[A]ll the boys live together, they all eat, drink, drive, walk, think (or rather react) together and when they come upon an unfortunate longhair, each tries to out-masculine the other, usually by seeing who can yell "queer" the loudest and lowest and with the greatest degree of Texas accent.[105]

In another issue of *The Rag*, the conservative student government candidate is referred to as "the fraternity candidate."[106] A column published on January 8, 1968 reads,

> One of the major benefits of this past holiday was the quiet of Austin, and the lack of the stereotypic Greeks who play the social game of putting down anything that doesn't look like them. So walking the streets of Austin without paranoia, I was able to concentrate on things other than flying missiles, and colored invectives.[107]

In March 4, 1968, Jim Simons told the story of distributing handbills at Scholz' Garten for a colloquium between liberals and radicals on campus. As they were leaving, a "fratrat" followed him out and asked for another handbill. After Simons handed him the bill, the fraternity member crumpled it into a ball and threw it into Jim's friend's face.[108]

Clearly, white Greeks positioned themselves opposite the liberal student movements on campus. Reports in *The Rag* indicate that Greeks were, if not more conservative than the average University of Texas student, more hostile and violent

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[105] Anthony Howe, "I Would Suggest that the Situation of Texas Hippies Vis-à-vis their Physical Well-Being Could Rightly Be Termed Very Dangerous OR Paranoia," *The Rag*, Jan. 2, 1967, 10-11.
[106] *The Rag*, March 20, 1967, 1.
[107] Scott Pittman, "Drag-Net!" *The Rag*, Jan. 8, 1968, 12.
[108] Jim Simons, "Straight" Fun," *The Rag*, March 4, 1968, 13.

towards their liberal peers. While “Protest” and “Hippie” parties mock the liberal movement, *The Rag* articles make clear that groups within the Greek community actively attacked student members of the new left. If anything, this evidence indicates that the liberal movement on campus was notable enough to Greeks to elicit such direct, hostile, and violent resistance. Greeks’ disdain for the visible liberal movement on campus also contributed greatly to the change in their role on campus, and as a result, the way Greeks represented themselves in the *Cactus.*

Chapter 13: Conclusion

This report attempts to explain the change in *Cactus* photographs of University of Texas fraternities and sororities. In 1965, as many college campuses were alive with civil rights and anti-war protests, Greeks existed in their own, isolated world. While many students were becoming politically active, Greeks, at least as they represented themselves in the *Cactus*, were focused on socials, mixers, and formals. Since Greeks submitted photos to the *Cactus* to be used in their publications, this movement towards visual homogeneity, materialism, and superficial, co-ed, social interaction rather than more personal bonding time with sisters and brothers is proven to be more than just a coincidence. The change is the result of growing political polarization on campus and competition from other student groups and was made easier by the established support from national offices and structures independent from the university itself. While sororities and fraternities claim to be rooted in timeless traditions, customs, and values, these changes in the *Cactus* photos and, by extension, in the organizations' roles and identities on campus prove that sororities and fraternities at the University of Texas at Austin shifted and changed with the waves of political activism surging across the country, particularly the development of the new left within college communities.

The nature of yearbook photos certainly limits analysis of individual differences within organizations. If there were any members of sororities or fraternities that went against the norm—that protested the war or identified with the new left movement on campus—their individuality was usurped by the group identity as represented in the

Greek photos. These complexities are lost within the uniformity of group portraits and the possible choice not to include their leftist involvement in informal photographs or lists of members' accomplishments and campus activities. However, the photos serve to represent group identities on campus, and the changes in the Greek photos between 1945 and 1970 indicate a change in sororities' and fraternities' role at the University of Texas in response to both growing extra-curricular options and visible liberal political activity that was contrary to the Greeks' traditionally conservative political values.

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